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A Study of Yogācāric Influence on Tathāgatagarbha Doctrine as Found in *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*

by

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Abstract

Through a close examination on three Sanskrit compounds – i.e., tathāgatanairātmyagarbha, tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna and parinișpannasvabhāvas tathāgatagarbhahṛdayam – in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, this thesis will demonstrate how the tathāgatagarbha thought in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* is significantly enriched by Yogācāric influence.

First, in regard to tathāgata-nairātmya-garbha, a doctrinal review of the term "nairātmya" is necessary, because its definition differs according to different traditions. In primitive Buddhism, the term "nairātmya" is a synonym of the term "anātman" (non-existence of a substantial self), which indicates that in the realm of suffering and the impermanence of life phenomena that arise according to the principle of co-dependent origination/ pratītyasamutpāda, no eternal and dependent ātman can be found. According to the Madhyamaka School, the term "nairātmya" is a synonym of the term "niḥsvabhāva" (no intrinsic-nature) which implies that all beings, whether conditioned or unconditioned, are all devoid of an ever-abiding intrinsic nature. For the Yogācāra School, the reality of nairātmya is said to be grasped under the principle of mind-only. That is to say, the imagined self /kalpitātman that is the presentation of mind is unreal, while the indescribable self/ anabhilāpyātman that is the genuine mind itself is real. Finally, it can be said that the tathāgata-nairātmya-garbha in *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* accords well with the Yogācāra teaching. In other words, it is the Yogācāric sense of nairātmya that sheds an influence upon the tathāgatagarbha doctrine.

Secondly, in regard to tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna, a doctrinal development is promoted owing to the identification of tathāgatagarbha with ālayavijñāna, which according

to the Yogācāra School is also named "sarvabjījavijñāna" (cognition as the seed of everything). This latter synonym references its function of bringing forth all beings just as a giant tree originates from a seed. As a result of its identification with the ālayavijñāna, the tathāgatagarbha is said to be endowed with the function of bringing forth all forms of existence and thus becomes the "producing cause" of all. This interpretation is not seen in earlier scriptures wherein the tathāgatagarbha is described simply as a static substance supporting all beings.

Thirdly, in regard to parinispannasvabhāvastathāgatagarbhahṛdayam, the implication of the tathāgatagarbha was expanded substantially by declaring that parinispannasvabhāva is the very essence of tathāgatagarbha. The term "parinispannasvabhāva" according to some important Yogācāra texts is defined as tathatā (ultimate realm of suchness). The combining of parinispannasvabhāva with tathāgatagarbha that had formerly focused on the subjective potential of realizing wisdom, shifts the doctrinal emphasis toward the objective realm of realized perfection.

This thesis reveals that, having assimilated the Yogācāric doctrine of dharmanairātmya, ālayavijñāna and parinispannasvabhāva, the tathāgatagarbha thinking in *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* presents the comprehensive and distinctive features in comparison to the scriptures that preceded it.

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my beloved

Father, Yang-Run Hsiao (蕭養潤),

Mother, Chin-Chih Lee (李金枝), and

Husband, Tsung-Hsien Lee (李宗賢),

whose love and support made my journey joyful during my study.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The introduction will discuss the contents of this thesis from the perspective of the following three topics:

1) A General Statement about This Study
2) A Brief Review of Related Research
3) Methodologies Employed in This Study

1) A General Statement about This Study

To investigate the Yogācāric influence on tathāgatagarbha doctrine, it is firstly necessary to have a short review on the development of the tathāgatagarbha tradition.

The tathāgatagarbha tradition, just as other great streams of thought, originated from an upstream source that was relatively simple and primitive. It afterward flowed through the midstream that accumulated various influences and then it eventually constructed a magnificent and comprehensive downstream. From the simple to the more complex, the course of development of the tathāgatagarbha tradition is described by many scholars. To cite some examples, Jikido Takasaki determines the sequence of the tathāgatagarbha texts through such clues as their contents and their time of translation. According to Takazaki's study, the order of several important texts is as follows:

1) the *Tathāgatagarbha sūtra*,
2) the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivartasūtra*,
3) the *Śrīmālā-devi-sūtra*, the *Ratna-gotra-vibhāga*, and finally
4) the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra.*[1]

Kokan Ogawa follows this formulation and classifies the tathāgatagarbha texts into the

[1] See Jikido Takasaki (高崎直道): *The Formation of the Tathāgatagarbha Thought* (如來藏思想の形成)

following three stages:

1) the first consists of the sutras that focus on the tathāgatagarbha, such as the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* and the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśa-parivarta.*

2) The second consists of the commentaries on the tathāgatagarbha such as the *Buddhadhātuśāstra* and the *Ratnagotravibhāga* that are dedicated to concluding and systematizing the antecedent sūtras.

3) The third consists of the sutras and commentaries that have combined the thoughts of tathāgatagarbha and the ālayavijñāna, such as the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* and the *Mahāyāna-śraddhotpāda.*[2]

Akira Suganuma classified the tathāgatagarbha texts into three categories according to the relationship between tathāgatagarbha and ālayavijñāna.

1) First were the texts wherein the tathāgatagarbha is unrelated to the ālayavijñāna,

2) second, the texts wherein the tathāgatagarbha and the ālayavijñāna are mentioned but not combined, and

3) third, the texts wherein the tathāgatagarbha and the ālayavijñāna are combined, for example in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra.*[3]

Yin-shun pointed out that the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, the former half of the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, the *Aṅgulimālasūtra* are the initial scriptures of the tathāgatagarbha teaching. Relatively, such sutras as the *Śrīmālādevisūtra*, and the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatva-nirdeśa-parivarta-sūtra* that are systematically composed and similar to the commentarial

[2] See Ogawa, Kokan (小川弘貫): *Tathāgatagarbha Thought in the Laṅkāvatārasūtra* (楞伽経に於ける如來藏思想) *in Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies* (印度学佛教学研究) 9:1, 1961

[3] See Suganuma, Akira(菅沼 晃): "On Tathāgatagarbha Teaching in the Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra" (入楞伽経の如來藏説について) *in Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies* (印度学佛教学研究) 22:2, 1974

literature, are mature and late scriptures within the tathāgatagarbha tradition.[4]

To sum up, according to the opinions of the above scholars, it is possible to reach at least three perspectives.

1) First, the development of the tathāgatagarbha teaching as well as the compilation of the tathāgatagarbha scriptures follow the historical process of movement from simplicity to complexity.
2) Second, the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* is a very early sutra of the tathāgatagarbha tradition, and the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* is comparatively later.
3) Third, later texts of the tathāgatagarbha tradition apparently have been influenced by the Yogācāra philosophy and the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* represents a typical example.

Based on the above assumptions this thesis takes the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, the *Śrīmālādevisūtra* and the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* as the representative works of the initial, the middle and the later stages of the tathāgatagarbha tradition respectively.

Actually, in its chapter on "Rejection of Meat-eating", the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* refers to several tathāgatagarbha-relevant scriptures when it states, "meat-eating is rejected by me in such sutras as the *Hastikakṣya*, the *Mahāmegha*, the *Nirvāṇa*, the *Aṅgulimāla*, and this *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*"[5]. Among those, the *Hastikakṣya* aims to propagate the śūnyatā philosophy that all phenomena is illusion-like (*mayopama*), while no direct and obvious teaching on the tathāgatagarbha can be found. The *Mahāmeghasūtra* insists that "all sentient beings have Buddha nature [and] tathāgata is ever-abiding and changeless" in order

[4] See the details in Yin-shun (印順): *Ru Lai Zang Zhi Yan Jiu* 如來藏之研究 *(A Study on Tathāgatagarbha)*, chapter five "The Initial Scriptures of the Tathāgatagarbha Teaching" (如來藏說之初期聖典) . Taipei: Zheng-Wen 正聞 Publisher, 1992

[5] "象脇與大雲、涅槃、央掘摩, 及此楞伽經, 我皆制斷肉". See T. 16, p. 624c.

to indicate that the Dharma-kāya of tathāgata is inconceivably idealized. Similarly, the *Aṅgulimālasūtra* propagates that "all sentient beings have tathāgatagarbha, [and] the tathāgatagarbha is constantly changeless". The former half of the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* emphasizes that all sentient beings have Buddha nature and that the Dharma-kāya of the tathāgata is constant and changeless. From the tathāgatagarbha thought found in the *Mahāmeghasūtra*, *Aṅgulimālasūtra* and *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* that probably influenced the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* we can derive two points.

1) First, all sentient beings possess the tathāgatagarbha or Buddha nature, and therefore, although the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* contains a classification of five gotras or lineages, it eventually assumes the principle of one-vehicle (*eka-yāna*), in view of the fact that, according to its contents, all sentient beings are destined to attain Buddhahood.

2) Second, based on the assumption that the tathāgatagarbha intrinsically is the same as the Dharma-kāya in that it is ever-abiding and changeless, it can be inferred that in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* the tathāgatagarbha is a theory that can serve as the ultimate support of all beings pure and impure.

However, among all the tathāgatagarbha scriptures prior to the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, the most important ones are the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* and the *Śrīmālādevisūtra*, for the reason that these two can be found obviously quoted and elaborated in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra.* For example, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* quotes a paragraph from the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*[6] in order to discuss the difference between the tathāgatagarbha and the ātman explained in the the Brahmanical tradition of India in order to modify the primitive teaching of tathāgatagarbha. Moreover, in mentioning Śrīmālādevī, the protagonist of the

[6] See the details in T.16, p.489a~b, p.529b~c, or p.599b~c.

Śrīmālādevīsūtra [7] the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* aims to emphasize the excellence of the tathāgatagarbha teaching, which is beyond the reach of the śrāvaka and the pratyeka-buddha. It is owing to the consideration that the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* and the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* have influenced the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* that the second chapter of this thesis is dedicated to a discussion on the introduction of these two sutras in order to locate this study within the macro scheme of the historical development of the tathāgatagarbha idea found in the primary materials – both sūtra and commentarial.

After a preliminary review of the development of tathāgatagarbha tradition it is appropriate to discuss the reciprocal influence between the Yogācrāra School and the tathāgatagarbha tradition.

In the academic community of India and Tibet, the Mādhyamika school and the Yogācāra school (also named *Vijñānavāda*) are regarded as the two main streams of Mahāyāna Buddhism. However, in the academic circle of Chinese Buddhism the tathāgatagarbha tradition has been regarded as separate from Mādhyamika and Yogācāra from very ancient times. For example, Fa-zang (法藏, 643~712) in his work *Da-Sheng-Qi-Xin-Lun-Yi-Ji* (大乘起信論義記) classified Buddhism into four schools, namely,

1) the School that grasps the dharma in accord with [its] characteristic(隨相法執宗),
2) the school of genuine śūnyatā without characteristics (真空無相宗),
3) the school of the dharma-characteristic of vijñāpti-mātra (唯識法相宗) and
4) the school of tathāgatagarbha-based origination (如來藏緣起宗).[8]

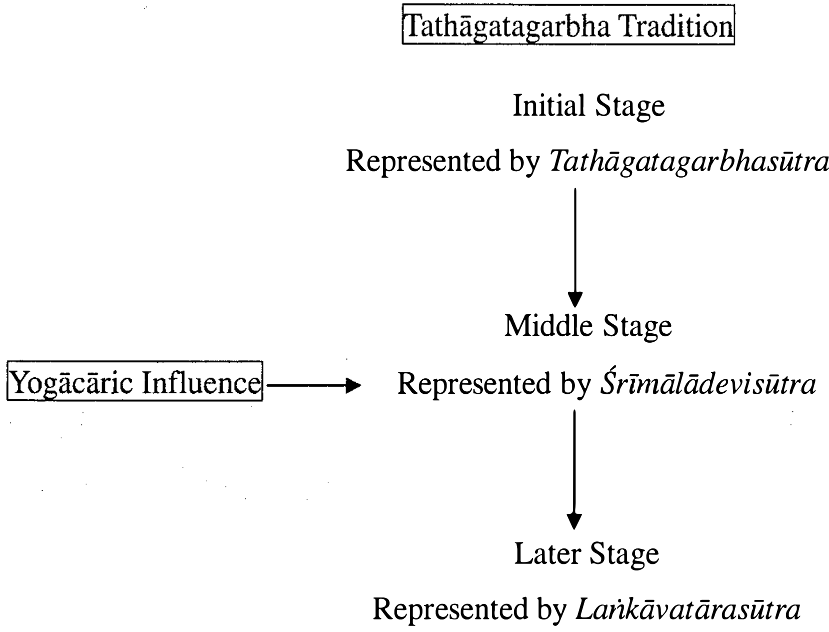
Among these, the first school is represented by the Theravāda sects while the last three are

[7] See the details in T.16, p.510c, p.557a, or 620a.
[8] See the details in T. 44, p.243b. Besides, in the other work entitled *Ru-Leng-Qie-Xin-Xuan-Yi* (入楞伽心玄義) Fa-zang named the four schools – the Existent-characteristic school (有相宗), the Non-characteristic school (無相宗), the Dharma-characteristic school (法相宗) and the Genuine characteristic school (實相宗) – into which the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* is sorted. See *Manji Zokuzokyo* (Supplement to the Taisho Edition of the Buddhist Canon 卍字續藏經, hereafter 卍) Vol. 25, p.411a, Taipei: Xinwenfeng 新文豐, 1994.

represented by the three branches of Mahāyāna philosophy. This classification of Buddhist schools has been followed throughout the ages. In modern times eminent Chinese scholars such as Tai-xu (太虛) and Yin-shun (印順), in classifying "the three branches of Mahāyāna,"[9] also regard the tathāgatagarbha tradition as an independent branch distinguished from the Mādhyamika and Yogācāra schools.

Among the three branches of Mahāyāna, the Yogācāra school that teaches the false manifestation of consciousness and the tathāgatagarbha tradition that teaches the reality and eternity of mind were prosperous during the middle and later period of the Mahāyāna Buddhism. Owing to their prosperity, the tathāgatagarbha tradition overlapped the time that the Yogācāra school prevailed, and owing to the fact that these two approximately simultaneous branches held within themselves many similar concerns, a reciprocal effect between these two trends of Mahāyānic doctrine was logically assumed. What can be surmised from the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, which is generally classified by Chinese scholars into the tathāgatagarbha tradition, is that there are some newly invented terms that vividly reflect the Yogācāric influence on this sūtra. For example, the terms "tathāgatanairātmyagarbha," the "tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna," and the "pariniṣpanna-svabhāvas tathāgatagarbha-hṛdayam" all mirror Yogācāric influence from different perspectives. Actually, the Yogācāric influence marks the most important feature of the doctrinal development in the later period of the tathāgatagarbha tradition. The illustration below shows such a trend of development.

[9] The "three branches of Mahāyāna" (大乘三系) is frequently mentioned in many of Yin-shun's works. They are, first, the branch emphasizing śūnyatā and the temporary designation only (性空唯名), namely the Madhyamaka School; second, the branch emphasizing vijñāpti-mātra and the illusionary nature of phenomena (虛妄唯識),viz. the Yogācāra School and third, the branch emphasizing the real and eternal mind-only (真常唯心), i.e. the tathāgatagarbha tradition.



The vertical development of the tathāgatagarbha tradition is intercepted by the horizontal influence from the Yogācāra School. The increasing density of shadow indicates the growing intensity of Yogācāric influence.

Since the Yogācāric influence appears to be the most evident in the later period of the tathāgatagarbha tradition, it is interesting to reveal the ways in which this influence is found. Specifically speaking, the Yogācāric influence as found in *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* is revealed by three Sanskrit compounds, i.e., tathāgatanairātmyagarbha, tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna and pariniṣpannasvabhāvastathāgatagarbhahṛdayam, which are the three main issues addressed in this thesis.

Briefly, the first compound, tathāgatanairātmyagarbha, will be taken up from the Yogācāric perspective of dharmanairātmya (non-substantiality of dharma). The second compound owing to its identification with ālayavijñāna, the term tathāgatagarbha will be understood as that which is endowed with the function of bringing forth all forms of existence. The third compound, declaring that pariniṣpannasvabhāva is the very essence of

tathāgatagarbha, indicates that the significance of the tathāgatagarbha had been expanded substantially, especially from its being a potential of wisdom to its being a state of perfection.

2) A Brief Review of Related Research on the Laṅkāvatārasūtra

Among the many studies on the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, D. T. Suzuki's English translation based on Nanjio's Sanskrit edition has been recommended widely to this day. His *Studies in the Lankavatara Sutra* also provides us with yet another prominent achievement in this field. Following these foundation-laying studies done by Dr. Suzuki, we have the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* 楞伽經 which is Professor Jikido Takasaki's collation and interpretation of the sūtra. In his work, *Existence and Enlightenment in the Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra,* F. G. Sutton explains this sūtra from an ontological and epistemological perspective. The 楞伽阿跋多羅寶經親聞記 is a compilation by Yin-hai of Yin-shun's lecture on the sūtra. All of these eminent works contribute an overall description of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra,* but only several sections are dedicated to an introduction to and, only briefly, of the tathāgatagarbha doctrine.

There are a few periodical articles on the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* that focus especially on the tathāgatagarbha doctrine. For example, Ogawa in his article, "Tathāgatagarbha Thought in the Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra" (楞伽経に於ける如來藏思想) in the *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies* (印度学佛教学研究)[10], specially emphasizes the relationship between tathāgatagarbha and ālayavijñāna. Suganuma, in his article, "On Tathāgatagarbha Teaching in the Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra" (入楞伽経の如來藏説について) in the *Journal of Indian and*

[10] In issue 9:1, 1961.

Buddhist Studies (印度学佛教学研究)[11] concludes that the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* assimilated the ālayavijñāna on the basis of the tathāgatagarbha tradition. By indicating the association between ālayavijñāna and tathāgatagarbha these papers imply a Yogācāric influence upon the tathāgatagarbha doctrine found in *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*. From these papers, the following questions are naturally raised: Is the Yogācāric influence upon the tathāgatagarbha doctrine confined to a discussion of its relationship to ālayavijñāna alone? If not, what else can possibly be explored on this topic? It is out of such questions that this study aims to make a thorough investigation on the basis of the existing literature.

3) Methodologies Employed in This Study

A solid foundation of textual comparison, a broad perspective of historical review, and a careful definition in philosophical analysis are the three approaches employed in this study.

1) Firstly, regarding textual comparison, three Sanskrit versions (Nanjo, Das and Vaidya), three Chinese versions (in the Liu Song 420-479, North Wei 386-535 and Tang 618-907 dynasties) and two Tibetan versions (one translated from Sanskrit and the other from the Song version of Chinese) of *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* are available to the scholarly community. Although all of these texts agree with one another for the most part, there are discrepancies that nuance important ideas among them. Therefore, a careful comparison of the different versions and translations of the text is critically necessary. For passages relevant to the main ideas discussed in this thesis, various versions are enumerated with their English translations. For sections that appear ambiguous in Sanskrit, this thesis relies mainly on the interpretation found in Dr. D.T. Suzuki's English translation because his

[11] In issue 22:2, 1974.

rendition can be considered the most authoritative interpretation to date. Textual differences among Sanskrit, Chinese, and Tibetan are carefully presented and discussed. It is believed that the textual comparison constructs a solid documentary foundation for further investigation on doctrinal matters.

2) Secondly, in order to give a comprehensive account of the tathāgatagarbha doctrine found in *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, it is essential and necessary to make a historical review of the tathāgatagarbha tradition so as to differentiate the original doctrine inherited by *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* from the newly conceived doctrine developed in *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* due to the influence of Yogācāric thinking. In order to achieve this goal, this thesis briefly examines the tathāgatagarbha doctrine presented prior to *Laṅkāvatārasūtra.* Specifically, the examination is focused on the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* and the *Śrīmālādevisūtra* because it is these sutras that explicate the tathāgatagarbha doctrine alluded to, mentioned by, or even praised in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra.* By means of this historical approach the Yogācāric influene on the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* as a later scripture is efficiently highlighted.

3) Thirdly, it must be emphasized that a philosophical analysis must be based on a clear definition of terms. This principle is observed in this study in its dealing with philosophical subjects. For instance, the term "nairātmya" appears in almost all traditions of Buddhism. However, the term nairātmya is nuanced differently from tradition to tradition. Therefore, when the term nairātmya has been combined with the term tathāgatagarbha to form the compound tathāgatanairātmyagarbha, it is necessary to determine in what sense the term nairātmya is used in each of the various traditions in order to contextualize the term nairātmya within a particular tradition.

Throughout this study, Sanskrit terms have not been italicized unless they appear within parenthesis ( ) or appear as titles, in which case they may have been also made bold.

CHAPTER TWO

TATHĀGATAGARBHA THOUGHT PRIOR TO THE *LAṄKĀVATĀRASŪTRA*

In order to highlight the Yogācāric influence on the tathāgatagarbha doctrine as shown in *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, it is necessary to make a comparison between *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* and its precedent scriptures, wherein the Yogācrāric scent had not yet been vividly breathed.

As a basis of comparison it helps to briefly inspect the development of the tathāgatagarbha tradition. The scriptures regarding tathāgatagarbha doctrine, according to their contents, genre, and the sequence of times, can be classified into three stages – (1) the initial stage, (2) the middle stage, and (3) the later stage[12].

(1) The Initial Stage

Scriptures in this stage aim to propagate the belief that the tathāgatagarbha, which is the perfect wisdom of Buddha, is inherent in all sentient beings. Endowed with tathāgatagarbha, all sentient beings are ensured of the potential of awakening. This simple and explicit teaching was conveyed by means of short stories or easy metaphors. The nine metaphors[13] in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* provide a good example.

(2) The Middle Stage

Scriptures in this stage attempted to assimilate the doctrines raised by other traditions, such as śūnyatā that is the main concern of the Madhyamaka tradition. Through the assimilation of other thinking the tathāgatagarbha teaching is obviously deepened and enriched. Moreover, scriptures in this stage no longer appeared as simple and plain

[12] This classification of stages can be found in the work of Ogawa, who in his article "Tathāgatagarbha Thought in the *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*" (楞伽経に於ける如來藏思想) classified the tathāgatagarbha thought into three groups: First, the sūtras discussing tathāgatagarbha, second, the commentaries organizing and systematizing those sūtras and third, the texts combining tathāgatagarbha thought and ālayavijiñāna thought. See *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies* (印度学佛教学研究) 9:1, 1961

[13] The nine metaphors are discussed on pp. 14~15 below.

metaphors, but adopted the genre of sophisticated argumentation. The *Śrīmālādevisūtra,* for example, presents these features.

(3) The Later Stage

Scriptures in this stage confronted the rise and development of the Yogācāra tradition and inevitably assimilated Yogācāric thinking and terminologies. Actually, the influence of the Yogācāra tradition represented the most important characteristic of the scriptures composed in this stage. Furthermore, the composition dedicated to expound the complicated thinking was even more exhaustive and elaborative in their dialectical style, as found in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra.*

Among those tathāgatagarbha texts that preceded the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra,* the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* and the *Śrīmālādevisūtra* deserve special attention. Those texts deserve special attention because they are the representative works of the initial and middle period of the tathāgatagarbha tradition respectively. Moreover, it is because the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra,* as a later scripture, has quoted a statement from the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* for further discussion, and also has mentioned Śrīmālādevi, the protagonist of the *Śrīmālādevisūtra.*[14] It is thus logically inferred that the tathāgatagarbha thought suggested in these two scriptures is to some extent inherited by or modified in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra.* Based on this assumption, this chapter will examine the tathāgatagarbha thought as it is found in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* and the *Śrīmālādevisūtra* in order to analyze the tathāgatagarbha thought found in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra.* The *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* gives a broader, historical perspective, and thus indicates those doctrinal elements that have been faithfully inherited from previous scriptures as well as those elements that have been

[14] The *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* cites a section from the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* in order to further differentiate *tathāgatagarbha* from *ātman*, while Śrīmālādevī and *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* are mentioned to praise the excellence of *the tathāgatagarbha* doctrine.

revised or newly added in the later stage.

We will focus our attention on 1) the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* and 2) the *Śrīmālādevisūtra* in the discussion that follows.

1) The *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*

Two Chinese versions[15] of the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* are extant to date – the *Da-Fang-Deng-Ru-Lai-Zang-Jing* (大方等如來藏經) translated by Buddhabhadra (359~429) and the *Da-Fang-Guang-Ru-Lai-Zang-Jing* (大方廣如來藏經) translated by Amoghavajra (704~773). These two versions differ in their style of writing, that is to say, the later version is more detailed in description. For example, in translating the verse/gāthā, Buddhabhadra's translation adopts the genre of five-syllable verse, while Amoghavajra's seven-syllable. Despite the difference in the style of translation no major conflict in contents is observed between these two versions. The following study is based on the later version of Amoghavajra, owing to the fact that it is a more elaborate translation and that it accords better with the Tibetan version[16]. In addition to the two extant Chinese versions and one Tibetan version, it is possible to restore several parts of the Sanskrit original in light of the sections cited in *Ratnagotravibhāga.*

As a very early scripture of the tathāgatagarbha doctrine, the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* established the main idea that featured that tradition, i.e., all sentient beings though enwrapped within defilements are endowed with the originally pure tathāgatagarbha. To reveal this creed, there is a narration on a miracle performed by the Buddha at the

[15] According to *Chu-San-Zang-Ji-Ji* (出三藏記集) composed by Seng-you (僧祐), there was once an earlier version of *Da-Fang-Deng-Ru-Lai-Zang-Jing (大方等如來藏經)* translated by Fa-ju (法炬) around 290A.D. to 312A.D., while it is no longer extant. See *Taisho Shinsho Daizokyo* 大正新脩大藏經 (hereafter T.) Vol. 55, pp.9c~10a。

[16] The Tibetan version of the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* is entitled *ḥPhags pa De bshin gśegs paiḥ sñiṅ po shes bya ba theg pa chen poḥi mdo,* translated by śākyaprabha, Ye śes sde. Peking edition, No. 924.

beginning of this sūtra:

> At that time, after the meal, the Exalted One on the great Candanagarbha pavilion entered the [state of having the] supernatural powers of a Buddha. [And because of this,] suddenly myriads of lotuses streamed out from the Candanagarbha [pavilion], with myriads of petals, as large as wheels of carts, colorful and not [yet] open. The [lotuses] then rose into the sky, covered this whole buddha-field, and remained [there] like jewel canopy. In each calyx of the lotuses was seated, crossed-legged, the body of a tathāgata possessing 32 great marks, emitting hundred of thousands of rays of light. At that time, owing to the supernatural power of the Buddha, the petals of all those myriads of lotuses, without exception became dark, deep black, putrid and disgusting, and not pleasing. But in the calyx of the lotuses the bodies of the tathāgatas sitting crossed-legged and emitting hundreds of rays of light are visible everywhere.[17]

This miracle is the very first of the nine metaphors presented in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* which conveys the idea that the tathāgata resides inside the not yet bloomed lotus, and once the withered petals are removed the bright and brilliant tathāgata will be revealed. In the same way, the ever-abiding tathāgatagarbha is in all sentient beings, and once the numerous vexations are extinguished, the pure and subtle tathāgatagarbha will be revealed. To emphasize this very basic doctrine, the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* continues by explaining the other metaphors of the nine:

The second metaphor: Pure honey is surrounded by a swarm of bees. The honey can

[17] This translation is a modified one of Micheal Zimmermann's in his work *A Buddha Within: The Tathāgatagarbhasūtra The Earliest Exposition of the Buddha-nature Teaching in India.* (Tokyo: The International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhologogy, Soka University, 2002) Bibliotheca Philologica et Philosophica Buddhica, VI. pp 97-98. The Chinese version of *Da-Fang-Guang-Ru-Lai-Zang-Jing* that reads: "爾時世尊於旃檀藏大樓閣中，食時[之]後，入佛神力故, 從旃檀藏忽然涌出俱胝那庾多百千蓮花，一一蓮花有俱胝那庾多百千葉，量如車輪，色香具足。是諸蓮花上昇虛空，遍覆一切諸佛刹土，共相合成，如寶宮殿，安住虛空。彼一切俱胝那庾多百千蓮花皆悉開敷，於一一花中皆有如來結跏趺坐，具三十二大丈夫相，放百千光。是時以佛威神力故，諸蓮花葉忽然痿瘁，形色臭穢而可厭惡，皆不悅意。於花胎中諸如來等，各放無量百千光明，普現一切諸佛刹土，皆悉端嚴。(in T. 16, p.461a)" accords well with this translation.

be obtained once the bees are removed.

The third metaphor: Grain is wrapped inside the husk. The grain is edible once the husk is removed.

The fourth metaphor: A gold brick is dropped into a filthy place. The gold brick can be utilized once discovered and the filth has been washed away.

The fifth metaphor: There is an extensive deposit of gold buried under the earth but unknown to the man who owns it. The gold deposit will become of great use once excavated.

The sixth metaphor: The seed and sprout exist inside the shell. The seed may gradually grow to be a giant tree, if it is provided with favorable soil condition.

The seventh metaphor: The Tathāgata's statue totally made up of jewels is enwrapped within a piece of foul cloth. This statue can be worshipped once the foul cloth is removed.

The eighth metaphor: An embryo of a holy king is conceived in an ugly and humble woman who is not aware of what she had conceived.

The ninth metaphor: the gold statue is hidden inside the burnt black mold. The gold statue will appear as a purified one once the back mold mud is removed.[18]

All these nine metaphors indicate to a simple doctrine: viz., The tathāgatagarbha is inherent in all sentient beings despite the fact that it is completely concealed behind greed, hatred, ignorance and all of the defilements. The pure dharma-kaya of the tathāgata will make its appearance felt once the defilements of vexation are eliminated.

The *tathāgatagarbha* as the innate nature of sentient beings functions to guarantee that

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[18] See T. 16, pp.461c~464a.

sentient beings will attain Buddhahood. However, exactly what is the essence of the tathāgatagarbha? Is its status a potential as the starting point or as the positive basis for practice that follows? Or is it a state of perfection, the final realm or the ultimate achievement after a series of practices? The clues to the solutions of these questions can be found in the nine metaphors.

In one place, the examples of the gold mine or the finished statue of gold as gold already there waiting to be discovered and excavated is implicit in the metaphors of gold and jewelry. That is, with regard to the fourth, the fifth, the seventh and the ninth metaphors, the existence of pure gold is a given. Although the procedures for exploitation and purification are still needed, the gold statue and statue of genuine jewelry are already in their pure and completed form. Similarly, the pure honey surrounded by a swarm of bees as found in the second metaphor is already produced, the grain enwrapped inside the husk as found in the third metaphor is already ripe. According to these metaphors, tathāgatagarbha is like a state matured and accomplished. It is a ready-perfected state awaiting to be discovered. The most vivid narration of this idea is found right before the first metaphor as a proclamation of the tathāgata who states:

> Those men and women of good families, [although] submerged in vexation, possess inside their inmost depths one hundred thousand Buddhas who are all like me. It is observed by the tathāgata-wisdom and the tathāgata-eye that they possess the Buddha-dharma body that is seated cross-legged, and [that] is silent and immovable. Inside all of the vexation and pollution, the tathāgatagarbha is immovable from the very beginning. The tathāgata cannot be defiled by any life-form or viewpoints. Therefore, now I make the following statement thus: "All those tathāgatas are not different from me.[19]

[19] 彼善男子、善女人，為於煩惱之所凌沒，於胎藏中有俱胝百千諸佛，悉皆如我。如來智眼觀察彼等有佛法體，結跏趺坐，寂不動搖。於一切煩惱染污之中，如來法藏本無搖動，諸有趣見所不能染，

According to this proclamation, the tathāgatagarbha as the innermost essence of sentient beings is characterized to be exactly the same as the perfected state of the Buddha. The form of the tathāgatagarbha can even be visualized as a solemnly seated Buddha. It is thus understandable that the tathāgata would declare: "All those tathāgatas are not different from me."

In another place, however, it is implied in the sixth and the eighth metaphor that the tathāgatagarbha is not so much a perfected or matured figure, but is an initial cause or an unseen potential of Buddhahood, just as a seed and a sprout existing inside the shell or just as an embryo of the noble king conceived in a woman. The seed and sprout although potentially able to grow into a giant tree, must still rely on the proper conditions of the outer environment. In the same way, the embryo of the noble king, though possessing the cause and the potential of gaining great achievement, still needs to depend on external conditions and practices to become perfected. To conclude, tathāgatagarbha as a state of accomplishment and perfection and as the state of cause and potential is understood to be so in view of the nine metaphors expounded in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra.* However, the latter implication of seed and potential seems to be more dominant and persuasive from the perspective of the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra.* In order to defend this point, it will be necessary to examine the compound tathāgatagarbha first.

The compound, "tathāgatagarbha" consists of two words, tathāgata and garbha.

是故我今作如是言：「彼等一切如來，如我無異。」See T. 16, p. 461c. Several terms in this section are nuanced differently in different versions. First, the term "胎藏"literally means womb, resembling the other Chinese word bao/胞, which means placenta or afterbirth. It is expediently translated as "inmost depths." A paralleling word is not found in the other Chinese version and the Tibetan version. Second, the term "佛法體" is literally translated as Buddha-dharma body. The other Chinese version translates it as 如來身 tathāgata-body, and the Tibetan version simply as tathāgata. Third, the term "如來法藏" corresponds to "如來藏/tathāgatagarbha" in the other Chinese version, but appears as *chos ñid* (*dharmatā*), which means dharma nature in the Tibetan version.

Tathāgata is an alternate name for the Buddha, the fully accomplished person. The meaning of garbha is more ambiguous. The noun "garbha" is derived from the verb root $\sqrt{}$*grabh* or $\sqrt{}$*grah*, which means "to conceive" as in the case of giving birth. The derivative "garbha" as a consequence has been understood to refer to the "womb". By extension, the term "garbha" refers to what is contained in the womb, viz. fetus or embryo[20]. Since garbha has this twofold meaning of womb and embryo, the compound tathāgata-garbha, which is generally used to modify sarvasattva/ all sentient beings, can be interpreted from at least two perspectives, namely, from the view of the tathāgata's womb and as the tathāgata's embryo. Based on these two possible meanings, the statement "sarvasattvās tathāgatagarbhāḥ[21]," can be explained in two ways: namely, first, all sentient beings are the womb of the tathāgata. In other words, the perfected tathāgata is conceived inside all sentient beings. Second, all sentient beings are the embryos of the tathāgatas. In other words, all sentient beings are tathāgatas in an embryonic state. Doctrinally speaking, both of these interpretations are reasonable. In the first instance, to mention that all sentient beings are the womb of the tathāgata, indicates that all sentient beings, though appearing defiled and restricted, conceive within them the pure and infinite nature of tathāgata. That is to say, the sentient beings are the defiled womb or the temporary receptacle of the perfect and ever-abiding tathāgatas. In this sense, the nature of garbha/womb is impure and impermanent, like the pupa from which one must be freed, thus, echoing the defiled aspect of the sentient beings.

In the second instance, to claim that all sentient beings are the embryos of the tathāgatas indicates that all sentient beings, though appearing imperfect in the present, are

[20] According to M. M. Williams *A Sanskrit English Dictionary*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

[21] This statement is cited in the twenty-seventh verse of the first chapter of *Ratnagotravibhāga*. This sentence is then explained from three aspects in light of the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*.

actually the embryonic stage of a tathāgata. The gene and potential needed to become a tathāgata is already inherent in the embryo. In this sense, the nature of garbha/ embryo is pure and permanent. The garbha as the source of an accomplished tathāgata, echoes the authentic and stainless core of the sentient beings.

However, so far as Chinese Buddhism is concerned, tathāgatagarbha is better understood as tathāgata's embryo. The idea of tathāgatagarbha is possibly rooted in the eighth metaphor of the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra.* The embryo of the holy king is conceived in an ugly and humble woman. In order to obtain clearer understanding of the term "tathāgatagarbha" in this context, it will be necessary to take a closer look at this eighth metaphor:

> There was a solitary woman, hideous-shaped and foul-smelling, her ugly look was like a *piśāca* (corpse-eating demon). Everyone who met her felt repulsive and horrible. She lived under [the roof of] another family that was poor and evil. She had sexual intercourse by chance and became pregnant. The fetus in her was destined to become the fetus of a cakra-vartin (a noble king who sets the Dharma wheel on motion). Nevertheless, that woman, though having become pregnant, never realized the greatness of her fetus. Because she considered herself poor and low, she always reflected in her feeble mind the following thoughts: "I am ugly in appearance, and I live under another's shabby house for a living. I cannot figure out what kind of human is to take a rebirth in my womb." Just in the same way, Oh men of good families! All sentient beings have no master and no dependence, are born in the three kinds of existence, make their temporary home in the shabby house, and are driven by the suffering of life and death. Nevertheless, each sentient being~~s~~ has the tathāgata's nature (*tathāgata-dhātu*), possesses the tathāgata's embryo (*tathāgata-garbha*), even though that sentient being may not be aware of this.[22]

[22] 有孤獨女人，惡形臭穢，容貌醜陋，如畢舍支，人所見者，厭惡恐怖，止於下劣弊惡之家。偶然交

It is obvious that the ugly and poor woman refers to all sentient beings suffering from transmigration, and the embryo or fetus of the noble king refers to the tathāgatagarbha. Here, the sentient beings appear as being defiled and feebleminded, still they all conceive tathāgatagarbha, which is the origin of a fully accomplished one. In this sense, "sarvasattva" that is modified by "tathāgatagarbha" present themselves with miserable appearance, while the tathāgatagarbha covered inside must be pure and perfect in nature. As a result, it is better to understand that tathāgatagarbha refers to tathāgata's embryo, that is pure in origin, instead of the tathāgata's womb, which is a temporary and imperfect receptacle. This argument can be supported when one considers the nature of tathāgatagarbha. That is, the tathāgatagarbha as an absolute being of purity and eternity is proclaimed in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, as follows: "This tathāgatagarbha is without defilement,"[23] or "the tathāgatagarbha of all sentient beings is ever-abiding."[24] It is tathāgata's embryo, the miniature symbol of the tathāgata, instead of the womb containing tathāgata, that possesses the attribute of purity and permanence.

At this point it may be appropriate to look back upon the question of whether the term tathāgatagarbha as found in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* is a state of tathāgata's perfection or whether it refers to a potential, an origin of attaining tathāgata-hood? The conflict between "already a tathāgata" and "becoming a tathāgata" existed from the very beginning of the tathāgatagarbha tradition, as shown in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* that, literally speaking, favors the side of "tathāgata-embryo" or "becoming a tathāgata", just as an embryo

通，腹中懷妊，決定是爲轉輪王胎。然彼女人雖復懷妊，亦曾無有如是思念。唯懷貧匱下劣之心，由心羸劣，常作是念：「我形醜陋，寄於下劣弊惡之家而過時日，亦不足知是何人類生於我腹。」如是如是，善男子！一切有情，無主無依，生三有中，寄於下劣弊惡之舍，爲生死苦之所逼迫。然一一有情，有如來界，具如來藏，是彼有情不覺不知。See T. 16, p. 463c.

[23] "是如來藏無所染", see T.16, p.462a.

[24] "一切有情如來藏常恆不變", see T.16, p.461c.

becomes a person.

Given the above supposition, it may be inquired what kind of "gene" would be inherited by this embryo if tathāgatagarbha is tathāgata's embryo? According to *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, it is tathāgata's wisdom that is highlighted as the main contents of tathāgatagarbha. This transcendental wisdom is to be fully revealed only after the attainment of tathāgata-hood. As for mortal beings who are drowning in the morass of ignorance and disturbance, the tathāgata's wisdom though inherent cannot be realized due to the restraining power of vexation. This fundamental doctrine that the tathāgata's wisdom is covered by vexation is repeated over and again in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, as found in such statements as: "vexation covers externally, the tathāgata's wisdom resides internally," [25] "all sentient beings though residing in the house of grasping and conceptualizing possess the Dharma treasure of Buddhas, such as the tathāgata's wisdom, power, and fearlessness,"[26] "all sentient beings are like the mold of a gold statue, the exterior is wrapped by the mud of vexation, the interior is spacious and filled with the treasure of the flawless wisdom of Buddha-Dharma."[27]

Since the tathāgatagarbha as "the wisdom of tathāgata" or "flawless wisdom of Buddha-Dharma" is veiled behind ignorance and disturbance, a doctrinal conclusion that "cutting off vexation in order to reveal the knowledge and understanding of the Buddha"[28] is sequentially reached. It is repeatedly pointed out in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* that the tathāgatagarbha – namely the great wisdom of tathāgata – will be revealed once the ignorance and vexation are removed. Thus, we find such sayings as:

[25] "煩惱於外而覆蓋, 如來之智處於內", see, T.16, p. 464a.
[26] "一切有情住於執取、作意舍中, 而有如來智慧、力、無所畏諸佛法藏", see, T.16, p.462c.
[27] "一切有情如金像模, 外爲煩惱泥所覆裹; 於內虛沖, 滿有佛法無漏知(智)寶", see, T.16, p.464a.
[28] "斷除煩惱, 開佛知見", see T.16, p.457c.

> ...the husks of vexation conceal the immeasurable knowledge and understanding of the tathāgata, therefore (the *tathāgata*), with expediency that is in accord with preaching the dharma, removes the vexation [of the sentient beings] and purifies the all-knowing wisdom.[29]

Or

> If one is able to remove ignorance and vexation, the nature (*dhātu*) of that sentient being is to be named the embodiment of the aggregate of great wisdom. Such a sentient being is to be named an aggregate of great wisdom.[30]

Up to this point, as found in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, the tathāgatagarbha as the opposite of vexation, is often mentioned as "tathāgata's wisdom". An example of this can be seen in the following statements:

> "Sentient beings are tangled in the annoying vexation's embryo.[31] In order to help them eliminate the vexation's embryo and to purify the tathāgata's wisdom, the tathāgata teaches the prominent doctrine to the bodhisattvas."[32]
>
> "The sentient beings wrap the tathāgata's wisdom in vexation,"[33]

and

> "vexation and numerous evil karmas conceal the most eminent body. They should be diligently purified and eliminated in order to reveal the tathāgata's wisdom."[34]

In these descriptions, the main contents of tathāgatagarbha is tathāgata's wisdom that is manifested after the removal of vexation. Despite this fact that the tathāgata is perfect in wisdom, compassion, merit and all the other dimensions, the tathāgatagarbha, that is in the

[29] "煩惱糠檜覆蔽如來無量知見, 故以方便如應說法, 令除煩惱, 淨一切智." See, T.16, p.458a.

[30] "若能淨除無明煩惱, 是有情界, 是則名爲大智聚體; 彼之有情, 名大智聚." See T. 16, p. 463a.

[31] Maybe out of symmetrical consideration, in Amoghavajra's version the twinned translation of "tathāgata's embryo/ 如來藏" and "vexation's embryo/ 煩惱藏" is found in such saying as: "the tathāgata observes the tathāgatagarbha of all sentient beings with the Buddha's eye, and preaches the dharma in order to eliminate all those sentient beings' vexation's embryo of desire, hatred, stupidity, greed, and ignorance ."(如來以佛眼觀察一切有情如來藏, 令彼有情欲、瞋、癡、貪、無明煩惱藏悉除遣故, 而爲說法.) See T. 16, p. 461c.

[32] "諸有情可厭煩惱藏纏, 爲彼除害煩惱藏故, 淨如來智故, 如來應正等覺爲於菩薩而說法要." See T. 16, p. 461c.

[33] "諸有情以煩惱裹如來智." See T. 16, p.462b.

[34] "煩惱眾惡業, 覆弊(蔽)最勝身, 當勤淨除斷, 顯出如來智". See T. 16, 459a.

causal stage or initial phase, is highlighted with respect to the aspect of tathāgata's wisdom. According to the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, the most important content or the most essential element of tathāgatagarbha is the wisdom of tathāgata. Therefore, tathāgatagarbha in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* is also named as "the great treasure of wisdom[35]" or "the treasue of wisdom.[36]"

To conclude, with regard to the tathāgatagarbha doctrine as found in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, four points should be enumerated.

(1) All sentient beings though covered by adventitious defilements are endowed with originally pure tathāgatagarbha.

(2) The implications that tathāgatagarbha is a state of perfection and that it is the potential are both found in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, though the latter seems to take a more dominant role.

(3) Tathāgatagarbha can be translated literally as tathāgata-womb and tathāgata-embryo. However, the latter appears more reasonable considering the absolutely pure nature of tathāgatagarbha.

(4) The essential element of tathāgatagarbha is the transcendental wisdom of tathāgata. Many descriptions in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* equate tathāgatagarbha to the wisdom of tathāgata.

Finally, as a section of this thesis, it may be useful to see whether there has been any Yogācāric influence on the tathāgatagarbha doctrine as expounded in the

[35] "大智藏", in "汝等穿斯大智藏, 獲得離貧作世尊", means: You wear this great treasure of wisdom so as to escape from poverty and become a Buddha. See T. 16, p. 463a.

[36] "智寶藏", in "大寶在身內, 常在不變易。如是觀察已, 而爲眾生說, 令得智寶藏, 大富兼廣利", means: The great treasure is inside the body, it is ever-abiding and changeless. After observing thusly, [the tathāgata] preaches to the sentient beings to make them obtain the treasure of wisdom, [and therefore enjoy] abundant wealth and extensive advantages. See T. 16, p. 458b.

Tathāgatagarbhasūtra. There seems to be at least two notions in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* may have some connection with Yogācāric thinking – namely, the notion of "embryo" in the eighth metaphor and the notion of "seed" in the sixth metaphor.

In the eighth metaphor, tathāgatagarbha is likened to the embryo of a noble king, and the destiny of dignity is determined based on the genetic relation. Similarly, according to Yogācāra tradition, sentient beings can be classified into five families,[37] respectively endowed with the gotra, or gene, of different potentials. What a sentient being can become is determined by the type of gotra inherent inside. It can be said that to some extent, the Yogācāric notion of gotra resembles the garbha/embryo of the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* in that both gotra and garbha/embryo serve as the gene or potential intended for further development. Those sentient beings classified into the family of the Tathāgata (*tathāgata-gotra*) can be safely viewed as those sentient beings who are endowed with tathāgata-garbha.

Actually, at a later stage of the tathāgatagarbha tradition, the "Buddha-gotra" as found in the *Ratna-gotra-vibhāga*, is declared to be the third, and perhaps also the most important, content of tathāgatagarbha. In spite of the fact that the *Ratna-gotra-vibhāga* interprets tathāgatagarbha from the perspective of gotra, this notion of gotra is not necessarily borrowed from the Yogācāra School. Jikido Takazaki pointed out in his great work *The Formation of the Tathāgatagarbha Thought* that the notion of tathāgata-gotra is already an important notion found in *Gaṅḍa-vyūha*, that preceded the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra.*[38] In this case, the idea that the tathāgatagarbha is tathāgata-gotra is more likely to be inherited from

[37] They are the "gotras" of śrāvaka, pratyeka-buddha, tathāgata, and aniyata who can become any of the previous three according to specific conditions, and those known as the a-gotra who not endowed with any gotra and thus cannot become awakened under any condition.

[38] See如來藏思想の形成 (Nyoraizō Shisō no Keisei), p. 58, Shunjusha (春秋社) Tokyo, 1974 (3rd edition 1978)

Gaṅḍa-vyūha, instead of coming from Yogācāric influence. Gotra is a notion prevalent in Indian culture and has been shared by various religions and traditions since ancient time. Furthermore, the Yogācāric sense of gotra though resembling tathāgatagarbha in view of its common nature as a pure and destined potential, differs from tathāgatagarbha in at least two ways.

First, the Yogācāric sense of gotra is comprised of three groups of beings – viz., śrāvaka, pratyeka-buddha and tathāgata, while tathāgatagarbha is of only one sort and is directed to the one-vehicle (*eka-yāna*) of tathāgata.

Second, the Yogācāric sense of gotra is selectively inhered in certain sentient beings, while tathāgatagarbha is universally endowed in all sentient beings, according to the teaching of the tathāgatagarbha tradition.

Considering these discrepancies, it can be inferred that even if the notion of gotra was shared by the tathāgatagarbha tradition and the Yogācāra School, the ideological trends were possibly developed individually. Therefore, it is unlikely that the garbha/embryo in the eighth metaphor owes its connotation to the Yogācāric notion of gotra.

The other Yogācāric notion closely connected with gotra is bīja/seed,[39] which is also mentioned in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*. In the sixth metaphor, tathāgatagarbha is likened to the seed of a giant tree. Owing to the potential of the seed, a plant grows to its fullest extent. Similarly, according to the Yogācāra School, the substratum bīja (*mūla-bīja* 根本種子), in many circumstances a synonym of ālayavijñāna, is the direct cause of all the beings. Whatever is generated is due to the maturation of the seeds stored in ālayavijñāna. Takasaki indicated that together with "garbha," the notion of "bīja" manifested in the sixth metaphor

[39] The *Yogācārya-bhūmi-śāstra* reads that "and this *gotra*, is also named *bīja*, also named as *dhātu*, also named as *prakṛti*".(又此種性, 亦名種子, 亦名爲界, 亦名爲性) See T. 30, p. 478c.

present the implication of growth and development. However, the notion of "bīja" here is not identical to that of the Yogācāra School.[40] Briefly speaking, the Yogācāric sense of bīja is much more extensive than that which appears in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra.* According to the Yogācāra School, all seeds (*sarva-bījaka*) manifest the attributes of multiplicity and diversity. Seeds can be pure or defiled, flawless or faulty. On the other hand, the seed of the giant tree, which is a metaphor for the tathāgatagarbha, must be pure and flawless absolutely so that it can serve as the source for the perfected tathāgata. Although the Yogācāra School tends to interpret tathāgatagarbha as the inherent flawless seed[41], there is no basis for claiming that the seed explained in the sixth metaphor is inspired by any Yogācāric influence.

Finally, on the basis of neither "gotra" nor "bīja", although they are regarded as important notions in the Yogācāra School, there is no substantive basis for claiming a relationship between the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* and the Yogācāra thinking. The *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, as an early scripture of the tathāgatagarbha tradition, does not have even an iota of scent to indicate a Yogācāric influence.

2) The *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*

With regard to the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* we have a similar textual circumstance as that discussed with regard to the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra.* First, the Sanskrit original is no longer extant; what remains are a few Sanskrit fragments cited in the *Ratnagotravibhāga.* Second,

[40] See 如來藏思想の形成, (*Nyoraizō Shisō no Keisei*), p. 59, Shunjusha (春秋社) Tokyo, 1974 (3rd edition 1978)

[41] The "inherent flawless seed", which is also the inherent flawless gotra (see footnote 39), is raised in such Yogācāra texts as *Yogācārya-bhūmi-śāstra* and *Mahāyāna-sūtrālaṁkāra.* Although those texts do not equate the "inherent flawless seed" to the tathāgatagarbha literally and directly, according to the viewpoint of Yin-shun, it can be assumed that the teaching of the "inherent flawless seed" is a Yogācāric interpretation of the tathāgatagarbha thinking that prevailed simultaneously. See the details in *A Study on Tathāgatagarbha* (如來藏之研究), p.204, Taipei: Zheng-Wen 正聞 Publisher, 1992

two Chinese versions of the *Śrīmālādevisūtra* are extant to date. The first one is entitled *Sheng-Man-Shi-Zi-Hou-Yi-Sheng-Da-Fang-Bian-Fang-Guang-Jing* (勝鬘師子吼一乘大方便方廣經) translated by Guṇabhadra in A.D.436. The second one, translated by Bodhiruci around A.D.706~713, is included in the Buddhist Tripitaka under the *Ratnakūṭa* class as the forty eighth section, entitled *Sheng-Man-Fu-Ren-Hui* (勝鬘夫人會). Thirdly, there is one Tibetan version[42] available. The Tibetan version, just like the second Chinese version by Bodhiruci, is included in the *Ratnakūṭa* class as one of its sections. Generally speaking, compared to that of Guṇabhadra, the version by Bodhiruci is smoother in writing style. Cross references to both versions are necessary; needless to say, the English translation by Alex Wayman and Hideko Wayman[43] should also be consulted.

Compared to the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* presents an even closer connection to the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*. It is mentioned in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* that:

> Oh Mahāmati! for the sake of Śrīmālādevī and other bodhisattvas endowed with profound, subtle and pure wisdom, I preach that the tathāgatagarbha is named ālayavijñāna and evolves together with the seven vijñānas, in order to make the śrāvakas realize the selflessness of the dharmas. Oh Mahāmati! For the sake of Śrīmālādevī, I preach that the realm of tathāgata is not within the realm of the śrāvakas, pratyeka-buddhas and other heretics. Oh Mahāmati! Such is the tathāgatagarbha-ālayavijñāna [and] this is the realm of the tathāgata.[44]

This paragraph in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* is obviously quoted from the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* wherein we read:

> ...the tathāgatagarbha is [within] the realm of the tathāgata. It is not what is to be

[42] *'Phags pa lha mo dpal 'phren gi sen ge'i sgra shes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo*, Peking edition, Otani University, ed., by D.T. Suzuki, No. 760 (48).

[43] *The Lion's Roar of Queen Śrīmālā--A Buddhist Scripture on the Tathāgatagarbha Theory*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1990 first Indian edition.

[44] 大慧! 我爲勝鬘夫人及餘深妙淨智菩薩, 說如來藏名藏識, 與七識俱起, 令諸聲聞見法無我. 大慧! 爲勝鬘夫人說佛境界, 非是外道二乘境界. 大慧! 此如來藏藏識是佛境界. See T. 16, p. 620a.

> known by all the śrāvakas and pratyeka-buddhas.[45]

According to this quotation of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* two points can be learnt. First, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* inherits the doctrinal stance of the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* in claiming that tathāgatagarbha is the superior realm of the tathāgata. Secondly, the term tathāgatagarbha raised in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* is nuanced in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* and thus becomes tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna. This newly coined term of tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna shows clearly the distinguishing feature of *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, which assimilates the Yogācāra thinking of the ālayavijñāna in the later stage of the tathāgatagarbha tradition.

Regarding the similarities and dissimilarities of the tathāgatagarbha thinking between *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* and *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, Jikido Takasaki sketchily states that based on the tathāgatagarbha *t*eaching of *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* goes a step further to discuss ālayavijñāna, so as to develop the unique tathāgatagarbha teaching involving Yogācāra thinking, which is not yet found in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra.*[46] Yin-shun also briefly points out that

> ... inheriting the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* and merging the Yogācāra thinking, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* makes a further explanation of the tathāgatagarbha. The *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* has not mentioned ālayavijñāna yet, while the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* combines tathāgatagarbha and ālayavijñāna into the eighth vijñāna.[47]

In order to highlight the Yogācāric influence on the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, it is thus necessary to examine the tathāgatagarbha teaching in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, so that we will have a basis for doctrinal comparison. In order to investigate the tathāgatagarbha teaching

[45] "如來藏者, 是如來境界, 非一切聲聞緣覺所知". See 勝鬘師子吼一乘大方便方廣經, T. 12, p. 221b.

[46] See *The Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra* (楞伽経) in *Bukkyo Koza* (佛教講座) 17, p. 60, Tokyo: Daizo Shuppan Kabushiki Kaisha(大藏出版株式会社) 2nd edition, 1985.

[47] See *Zu Lai Zang Zhi Yan Jiu* 如來藏之研究 (*A Study on Tathāgatagarbha*), p. 244, Taipei: Zheng-Wen 正聞 Publisher, 1992.

in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra,* the following discussion will take into account the following four topics viz.

I. Tathāgatagarbha and Ātman
II. Tathāgatagarbha and Śūnyatā
III. Tathāgatagarbha is Essentially Pure
IV. Tathāgatagarbha is the Supporting Cause

I . Tathāgatagarbha and Ātman

Primitive Buddhism established the doctrines of co-dependent origination (*pratītya-samutpāda*) and non-self (*an-ātman*) to refute the theory of ātman of traditional Brahmanism and to distinguish itself from other religions. According to the doctrine of non-self, both the transmigration in saṁsāra and the attainment of nirvāṇa depend on cause and condition. Within the constantly changing phenomenal world, no independent and ever-abiding intrinsic nature (*svabhāva*) can be found as a transcendental and eternal existence. The term "self-less" in the phrase "all entities of reality are 'self-less'" (*sarva dharmā anātmānaḥ*), in fact, is one of the "Three Signs of the Dharma" (*anitya, duḥkha* and *anātman*) utilized to distinguish Buddhism from other religions of India. This teaching of non-self is adhered to well by most Buddhist traditions. For example, in the period of sectarian Buddhism, even the Sarvāstivādins, who argued that all dharmas possess self-nature (*svabhāva*), showed respect toward the primitive teaching of non-self by claiming that the "dharma is existent (*dharma-bhāva*) while ātman is inexistent."[48] In the period of Mahāyāna Buddhism, the two schools of Madhyamaka and Yogācāra made efforts to interpret and deepen the teaching of non-self.

[48] Among the theories of ātman discussed by various sects, an unusual example is that proposed by the Vātsīputrīya, who held that both dharma and ātman are existent. The Vātsīputrīya was belittled as "heresy disguised as Buddhism" because it held the idea of the indescribable self (*anabhilāpya-pudgala*).

Despite the fact that non-self doctrine is commonly shared by various Buddhist traditions, the tathāgatagarbha tradition, which was established in the later period of Mahāyāna Buddhism, made a noticeable change. Some scriptures compiled in the initial stage of the tathāgatagarbha tradition strikingly equate tathāgatagarbha to ātman. For example, the *Aṅgulimālasūtra* reads, "all sentient beings are possessed of tathāgatagarbha-ātman," [49] and the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* reads "ātman is the very meaning of tathāgatagarbha; the statement that all sentient beings have Buddha nature is the very meaning of ātman."[50] To regard tathāgatagarbha as ātman and to value it as such, obviously is contrary to the claim of non-self insisted upon in primitive Buddhism, and is closer to the theory of ātman claimed in traditional Brahmanism.

Perhaps due to the possibilities of a doctrinal crisis, namely, the mingling of tathāgatagarbha with ātman and thus blurring the non-self feature of Buddhism, some Mahāyānists began to differentiate between tathāgatagarbha and ātman. As a result, the *Śrīmālādevisūtra*, as a scripture of the middle stage of the tathāgatagarbha tradition, seems to return to the primitive teaching of non-self, by stating:

> It is not the case that the tathāgatagarbha is the ātman, the pudgala, the sattva or the jīva. The tathāgatagarbha is not in the realm of the sentient beings holding on to the mistaken view that the body exists (*satkāyadṛṣṭi*), of the sentient beings who are confused and of the sentient beings holding on to the view of emptiness.[51]

Ātman, pudgala, sattva, and jīva are terms that refer to a permanent substance. "Ātman" describes the aspect of independence and self-dominance. "Pudgala" indicates the

[49] "一切眾生皆有如來藏我," See 央掘摩羅經 in T.2, p.539c.

[50] "我者, 即是如來藏義; 一切眾生皆有佛性, 即是我義." See 大般涅槃經 chapter seven in T.12, p.407b. According to the textual research done by Yin-shun, the first ten chapters of the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* were compiled in the initial stage of the tathāgatagarbha tradition, and thus should not be lumped together with the following chapters that were compiled later.

[51] "如來藏者, 非有我、人、眾生、壽者. 如來藏者, 身見有情、顛倒有情、空見有情, 非所行境." See T.11, p.677c.

inextinguishable soul in transmigration. "Sattva" emphasizes the congregate existence of five aggregates. "Jīva" suggests a being in a life cycle. All four terms refer to the same ever-abiding existence. By declaring that tathāgatagarbha is not ātman, pudgala, sattva, and jīva, the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* makes an effort to reverse the statement, "tathāgatagarbha-ātman" and to return to the traditional Buddhist doctrine of non-self. The *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* goes one step further to emphasize that those sentient beings holding the mistaken view that the body exists, i.e., those who are confused by the view of self (*ātman*), are not competent to enter the realm of tathāgatagarbha. According to this distinction posed by the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, we can see that the tathāgatagarbha as a Mahāyānic doctrine and ātman as a Brahmanical belief are quite different.

However, the tathāgatagarbha teaching found in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* tends more towards a rebuilding and praise of the ātman rather than a return to *an-ātman* as taught in the *Āgama*. The reason is that, although the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* refutes the ātman doctrine accepted in Brahmanism, it tends towards a doctrine of a perfect and ultimate ātman. The sūtra reads:

> The dharma-kāya of the tathāgata is the perfection of permanence, the perfection of bliss, the perfection of self (ātman), and the perfection of purity.[52]

In terms of the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, the dharma-kāya of tathāgata and the tathāgatagarbha in sentient beings are of the same nature, namely ultimately pure without defilement. The difference between dharma-kāya and tathāgatagarbha is not in nature but in condition: the pure dharma-kāya is already freed from the defilements of impurities, while the pure tathāgatagarbha is still covered by adventitious defilements. Although the names of

[52] "如來法身是常波羅蜜, 樂波羅蜜, 我波羅蜜, 淨波羅蜜." See T.11, p.677b. In this context, the four – permanence, bliss, self, and purity – indicate four characteristics that are found in saṁsāra, hence the term *paramitā,* translated "perfection" has the sense of "it goes to the other [shore]" (*param itā*) meaning that the tathāgatagarbha has "transcended" these four that characterize saṁsāra.

"dharma-kāya" and "tathāgatagarbha" are different according to difference in perspective, the characteristics of both are exactly the same.[53] Therefore, the perfection of self (*ātman*) becomes a defining-characteristic of not only the attribute of dharma-kāya but also the attribute of tathāgatagarbha. Even if the five aggregates that are the constituents of a sentient being are in fact impermanent, painful, lacking a self-nature, and impure, the tathāgatagarbha inherent in sentient beings is characterized as permanent, bliss, self, and purity. However, the self (*ātman*) in this context is not the ātman praised by Brahmanism, but is "the perfection of self," namely, the ultimately genuine self.

Thus, we can conclude that the tathāgatagarbha teaching found in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, while definitely disapproving the ātman theory held by Brahmanism, approves "the perfection of ātman" at the same time. Given that "tathāgatagarbha equals ātman" is a thesis posed by the *Aṅgulimālasūtra* and the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, the claim that "tathāgatagarbha is not ātman" can be regarded as an antithesis held by *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*. Finally, by advocating that "tathāgatagarbha is the perfection of ātman," the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* can be understood as a teaching that synthesizes the relationship between tathāgatagarbha and ātman. Thus the tathāgatagarbha expounded in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* can be understood as being eventually connected with a certain form of ātman, but not with the Brahmanical kind.

II. Tathāgatagarbha and Śūnyatā

The doctrine that all beings both conditioned and unconditioned are empty (*sarva-dharma-śūnyatā*) was maintained by the Madhyamaka school and gained popularity in the early period of Mahāyāna Buddhism. However, the tathāgatagarbha tradition that prospered

[53] The relationship between tathāgatagarbha and dharma-kāya will be discussed further later.

in the later period of Mahāyāna Buddhism criticized this teaching and depreciates it as an expedient (*upāya*) teaching. According to the tathāgatagarbha tradition, sarva-dharma-śūnyatā is not an ultimate and definite teaching, because that which is other than what is empty must exists as something substantial. Early scriptures of the tathāgatagarbha tradition often establish non-emptiness as an ultimate principle. To cite one example, the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* states:

> Emptiness means the non-existence of twenty five kinds of existences, as well as all vexations, all sufferings, all characteristics, all conditioned things……non-emptiness means the real and wholesome form, the permanence, bliss, self and purity that are motionless and changeless.[54]

That is to say, all conditioned things such as vexation and suffering are empty, while the unconditioned existences such as the attributes of the tathāgatagarbha are non-empty. This perspective consequently produces a conflict between early Mahāyāna and later Mahāyāna in that it raises the question whether emptiness (*śūnyatā*) or non-emptiness (*aśūnyatā*) is the ultimate principle or the perfect truth. Regarding this conflict between śūnyatā and aśūnyatā, the *Śrīmālādevisūtra* seems to provide a harmonious and comprehensive interpretation by stating:

> Tathāgatagarbha is at once the wisdom of śūnyatā [realized by] tathāgatas. Furthermore, this tathāgatagarbha i.e. the wisdom of śūnyatā realized by tathāgatas is of two kinds. Which are the two? [The first] is śūnyatā-tathāgatagarbha, that is, [Wisdom] freed of [mundane] knowledge not conducive to liberation and [freed from] all vexations. [The second] is aśūnyatā-tathāgatagarbha, that is, wisdom conducive to liberation realized by Buddhas innumerable as the sands of the

[54] "空者; 謂無二十五有, 及諸煩惱、一切苦、一切相、一切有爲行……不空者, 謂真實善色, 常樂我淨, 不動不變". See 大般涅槃經 Chapter Five in T.12, p.395b.

Ganges and [that possesses] the inconceivable Dharmas.[55]

To say that the "tathāgatagarbha is the wisdom of śūnyatā" is obviously an attempt to harmonize the tathāgatagarbha, which is usually viewed as substantially existent, with the teaching of śūnyatā.

Despite the fact that śūnyatā is a common doctrine shared by various traditions of Buddhism, the definitions of śūnyatā differ according to different scriptures and different schools. For example, according to the Madhyamaka school, śūnyatā implies that no intrinsic nature (*svabhāva*) is found in any sentient being. Specifically speaking, not only do the conditioned existences of myriad phenomena have no intrinsic nature, but even the unconditioned realm realized by the Buddha is also void of intrinsic nature. In the light of the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, however, "the wisdom of śūnyatā" equated with tathāgatagarbha is different from the śūnyatā of the Madhyamaka that denies intrinsic nature (*svabhāva*) altogether. The śūnyatā of tathāgatagarbha, according to the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, is further divided into two categories: the conditioned and impure phenomena is śūnya, while the unconditioned and pure existence is aśūnya. The theory that "some things are empty while the other things are not empty"[56] is a consistent opinion inherited from the very initial stage of the tathāgatagarbha tradition and is also a decisive factor for the tathāgatagarbha tradition that caused it to be seen as "the school insisting on existence (*bhāva*)."[57] Although the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* discusses śūnyatā as a synonym of tathāgatagarbha, this śūnyatā is neither the śūnyatā proclaimed by the Madhyamaka school as being synonymous with non-intrinsic-nature (*niḥsvabhāva*) nor is it the śūnyatā discussed in *Āgama* to imply the

[55] "如來藏者, 即是如來空性之智……此如來藏空性之智復有二種, 何等爲二? 謂空如來藏, 所謂離於不解脫智、一切煩惱; 不空如來藏, 具過恆沙河佛解脫智、不思議法". See T.11, p.677a.

[56] See *Aṅgulimalyasūtra* 央掘摩羅經: "有異法是空, 有異法不空," in T.2, p.527b.

[57] "有宗"(you-zong, Existence-school), includes the Yogācāra school and the tathāgatagarbha tradition, in opposition to the "空宗"(kong-zong Emptiness-school) that mainly indicates the Madhyamaka school.

principles of constant change and non-self, but rather it is the śūnyatā in accordance with the mind-only (*citta-mātra*) tradition, viz., the śūnyatā that is also aśūnya. In fact, it is this aśūnya-tathāgatagarbha that characterizes the essential feature of tathāgatagarbha. In regard to the essential feature of tathāgatagarbha, a closer observation will be made in next section.

Ⅲ. Tathāgatagarbha is Essentially Pure

That tathāgatagarbha is essentially pure (*prakṛti-pariśuddha*) but covered by adventitious defilements is a common teaching among all the tathāgatagarbha scriptures. The basic stance that tathāgatagarbha is pure in nature is uncompromised even if the method by which it is explained differs from scripture to scripture. The *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, for example, depicts the tathāgatagarbha as a perfect and concrete image of the tathāgata.[58] The *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, which presents a more theoretical view, refers to it as "essentially pure garbha" among the synonyms of tathāgatagarbha that it ennumerates:

> The garbha of the tathāgata (*tathāgatagarbha*) is the dharma-realm garbha (*dharma-dhātu-garbha*), the dharma-body garbha (*dharma-kāya-garbha*), supramundane garbha, and intrinsically pure garbha. This intrinsically pure tathāgatagarbha, as understood by me, though defiled by adventitious defilements, is still the inconceivable objectified world of the tathāgata.[59]

Since the defilement is "adventitious", it must be an external and temporary factor instead of an inextinguishable substance or inherent nature. Besides, the term dharma-kāya-garbha

[58] The *Da-Fang-Deng-Ru-Lai-Zang-Jing* (大方等如來藏經) reads: "... all the sentient beings, within all their emotional obstructions of desire, hatred and ignorance, possess the tathāgata-wisdom, tathāgata-eyes and tathāgata-body, [who] sits with legs crossed, solemnly and immovably ... [they] possess the garbha of the tathāgata (*tathāgata-garbha*) that is always without defilements, and is equipped with perfect characteristics exactly like me." (一切衆生, 貪欲、恚、癡諸煩惱中, 有如來智、如來眼、如來身, 結跏趺坐, 儼然不動……有如來藏常無染污, 德相備足, 如我無異) See T.16, p.457b.

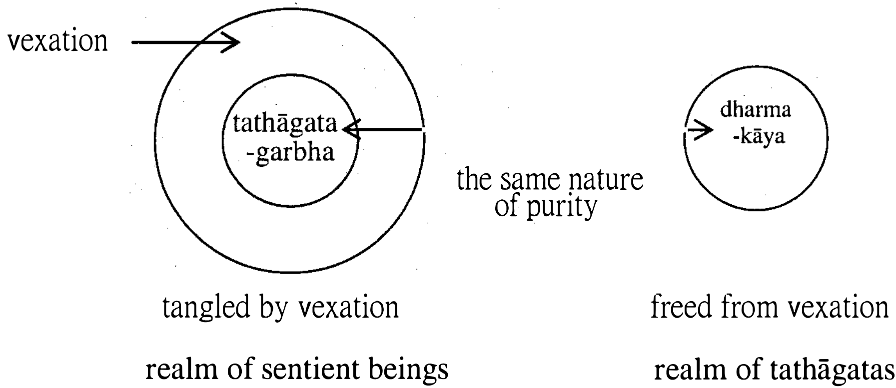
[59] "如來藏者, 是法界藏, 是法身藏、出世間藏、性清淨藏. 此本性淨如來藏者, 如我所解, 縱爲客塵煩惱所染, 猶是不可思議如來境界." See T.11, p.677c.

is a term to indicate the similarity between tathāgatagarbha and dharma-kāya, i.e. both tathāgatagarbha and dharma-kāya are pure in nature. What distinguishes tathāgatagarbha and dharma-kāya is not the nature but the condition. This is explained in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*:

> If there is no doubt about tathāgatagarbha that is tangled by immeasurable vexation, there is also no doubt about dharma-kāya that is freed from immeasurable vexation.[60]

> The dharma-kāya of the tathāgata when not separated from the garbha of defilements is called "garbha of tathāgata."[61]

The similarities and dissimilarities between tathāgatagarbha and dharma-kāya can be concluded into the illustration below.



realm of sentient beings

realm of tathāgatas

This doctrine that tathāgatagarbha is essentially pure even while enwrapped by adventitious defilements was carried over to later scriptures such as the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*. However, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* introduces this doctrine with a newly coined term "tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna" and thus giving it an obvious trace of Yogācāric influence.

[60] "若於無量煩惱藏所纏如來藏不疑惑者, 於出無量煩惱藏法身亦無疑惑". See T.12, p.221b.

[61] "如來法身不離煩惱藏, 名如來藏". See T.12, p.221c. "Garbha of tathāgata/煩惱藏" here appears sort of weird. Probably it is out of the consideration of symmetrical expression that "garbha of tathāgata / 如來藏" and "garbha of defilements/ 煩惱藏" comes in pairs. The same situation is found in Amoghavajra's version of the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, as mentioned in footnote 31.

No such trace is vividly sensed so far in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra.*

IV Tathāgatagarbha is the Supporting Cause

As stated in previous section, the tathāgatagarbha in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* has a twofold meaning – namely, the śūnya-tathāgatagarbha that is free from all vexations and the aśūnya-tathāgatagarbha that is the wisdom of Buddha and the inconceivable Buddha Dharmas. The metaphysical analysis is carried a step further in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* to indicate that since tathāgatagarbha is an inextinguishable existence, it can thus serve as an ultimate foundation of all. That is to say, not only the śūnya vexations take dependence upon tathāgatagarbha, the aśūnya merit of Buddha Dharma is also based on the tathāgatagarbha. The *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* reads:

> The tathāgatagarbha is the basis, the up-holder and the support of the treasury source of Wisdom not separated from liberation, It is also the basis, the up-holder, and the support of the conditioned dharmas that are separated from liberation.[62]

It is especially emphasized in the *Śrīmālādevisūtra* that this multifarious world of life and death is based on the tathāgatagarbha. The sutra reads:

> Because life and death on the basis of the tathāgatagarbha possess the tathāgatagarbha, they are named "life and death" [and this] is a sound argument ··· death is the decay of organs; life is the arising of new organs. It is not that tathāgatagarbha possesses life and death. Tathāgatagarbha is free of conditioned characteristics. Tathāgatagarbha is always abiding without changes. Therefore the tathāgatagarbha is the basis (*niśraya*), the beholder (*ādhāra*) and the support

[62] "如來藏者, 與不離解脫智藏, 是依是持是爲建立; 亦與外離不解脫智諸有爲法, 依、持、建立". See T.11, p.676c. The version of Guṇabhadra is not clear in wording here. The approximate meaning is that "the basis, the up-holder and the support of the un-released, the un-extinguished, the un-emancipated, and not-other than the inconceivable Buddha Dharma, is the tathāgatagarbha". (不離不斷不脫不異不思議佛法……斷脫異外有爲法依、持、建立者, 是如來藏) See T.12, p,222b. In either case of the two Chinese versions, tathāgatagarbha is indicated as the final basis of both the pure and the defiled dharmas.

(*pratiṣṭhā*).[63]

An important reason that the tathāgatagarbha can serve as the ultimate basis of the phenomenal world is explained in the paragraph above. Generally speaking, what serves as a basis or as a beholder must be relatively stable; and this is the reason that the nest of swallow is more stable when it is tied upon the eaves of a house than upon a swinging reed. In a similar way, this phenomenal world of life and death is conditioned, ever-changing, and fragile. The conditioned world itself is not conducive of being an ultimate shelter or support; instead, it itself needs to be based on some kind of noumenal existence, which is unconditioned, ever-abiding, and thus perfectly stable. This noumenal existence as the ultimate upholder, according to *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, is without doubt the tathāgatagarbha.

The tathāgatagarbha as described in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* is not only the upholder of this samsaric world but it is also the basis of enlightenment. The sutra reads:

> If there is no tathāgatagarbha, there would be no pain of suffering and the seeking for enlightenment. Why? These seven dharmas – the six consciousnesses and what is to be known – [would become] non-abiding even for an instant, and thus they would receive no suffering, could not detest nor reject [suffering] and would not desire and seek enlightenment. The tathāgatagarbha has no beginning; it is a dharma that neither originates nor extinguishes; thus, it can bear all suffering, can detest suffering and can seek nirvāṇa.[64]

The tathāgatagarbha as an unconditioned dharma is free of origination and extinction. It is due to this attribute of absolute stability that the tathāgatagarbha is capable of preserving the feeling of suffering and stirring the aspiration for enlightenment. In this sense, the tathāgatagarbha is the ultimate basis and the motive power in support of enlightenment.

[63] "生死者依如來藏……有如來藏, 故說生死, 是名善說……死者, 謂諸受根壞; 生者, 新諸根起, 非如來藏有生有死. 如來藏者離有爲相, 如來藏常住不變, 是故如來藏是依, 是持, 是建立". See T.12, p.222b.

[64] "若無如來藏者, 應無厭苦、樂求涅槃. 何以故? 於此六識及以所知, 如是七法, 刹那不住, 不受眾苦, 不堪厭離, 願求涅槃. 如來藏者, 無有前際, 無生無滅法, 受諸苦, 彼爲厭苦, 願求涅槃." See T.11, p.677c.

What is interesting is that, other than tathāgatagarbha, the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* refers to "the stage in which ignorance dwells" (無明住地/ *wu-ming-zhu-di* / *avidyāvāsabhūmi*) as the basis, the upholder, and the support of the defiled dharmas of vexation:

> The [defiled] dharmas, more numerous than the sands of the Ganges [and] that are to be cut off by the bodhi-wisdom of the tathāgata, are all supported and established on "the stage in which ignorance dwells." It is like all seeds that grow having the ground as their basis and support. If the ground collapses [and does not support the growth], then those seeds will collapse as well. In the same way, the [defiled] dharmas, more numerous than the sands of the Ganges [and] that are to be cut off by the bodhi-wisdom of the tathāgata, are all dependent upon and supported by "the stage in which ignorance dwells" to grow. When "the stage in which ignorance dwells" collapses, the [defiled] dharmas, more numerous than the sands of the Ganges [and that] are to be cut off by the bodhi-wisdom of the tathāgata, will all collapse as well.[65]

Thus according to the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* both tathāgatagarbha and "the stage in which ignorance dwells" are the basis, the up-holder, and the support. However, "the stage in which ignorance dwells" can serve as the basis of only the defiled dharmas, but cannot be the basis of all dharmas, in the manner that the tathāgatagarbha is. The reason is that "the stage in which ignorance dwells" is extrinsic and not intrinsic, variable and not invariable. What is extrinsic and variable can serve as a temporary basis only, while the intrinsic and invariable can be the ultimate and eternal basis of all. Therefore, "the stage in which ignorance dwells," though mighty and deep-rooted, is a relative basis of ever-changing phenomena, while the ever-abiding tathāgatagarbha that is the intrinsic core of all beings has the capacity to be the absolute basis of all dharmas, including even "the stage in which

[65] "過於恆沙如來菩提智所應斷法, 一切皆是無明住地所持、所建立, 譬如一切種子皆依地生、建立、增長. 若地壞者, 彼亦隨壞. 如是過恆沙等如來菩提智所應斷法, 一切皆依無明住地生、建立、增長. 若無明住地斷者, 過恆沙等如來菩提智所應斷法, 皆亦隨斷." See 勝鬘師子吼一乘大方便方廣經, T.12, p.220b~c.

ignorance dwells."

The above-mentioned four topics of the tathāgatagarbha teaching[66] are reinterpreted and expanded further in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra.*

As a discussion constituting a part of this thesis, it is appropriate to consider the Yogācāric influence upon the tathāgatagarbha doctrine that is found in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra.* Generally speaking, the Yogācāric influence upon *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* is hardly visible, if indeed, there should be any at all. J. Takazaki, in his *The Formation of the Tathāgatagarbha Thought*, discussing the relationship between the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* and Yogācāra thinking, concludes four possible points associated with the both.

1) First, the cause on which both saṁsāra and nirvāṇa depend is interpreted as the tathāgatagarbha in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, while its Yogācāric counterpart is the ālayavijñāna.
2) Secondly, jñeya, "what is to be known" (所知, suo-zhi), as translated by Bodhiruci, seems to be inspired by Yogācāric thought concerning "the grasping and the grasped."
3) Thirdly, the idea that the intrinsically pure mind is "stable" as declared in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* might be inspired by the Yogācāric philosophy that distinguishes the stable mind from the unstable mind.[67]
4) Fourth, the "the stage in which ignorance resides" (*avidyāvāsabhūmi*) coined in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* finds its counterpart in the Yogācāric thinking of

[66] See p.29 above for the four topics – Ⅰ Tathāgatagarbha and Ātman, Ⅱ Tathāgatagarbha and Śūnyatā, Ⅲ Tathāgatagarbha is Essentially Pure, Ⅳ Tathāgatagarbha is the Supporting Cause. The details of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* will be given in the following chapters.

[67] For further details, see *The Formation of the Tathāgatagarbha Thought* (如來藏思想の形成), p.350~362, Tokyo: Shunjusha (春秋社), 3rd edition, 1978.

"undefiled ignorance" (*akliṣṭam ajñānam*).

It is not surprising to find similar conceptions between the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* and the Yogācāra tradition, since both of them aim to excavate some sort of metaphysical existence or psychological matrix that is relatively deep-rooted and stable. The cause on which both saṁsāra and nirvāṇa depend and the stable mind, for example, are natural conclusions following the logical train of thought found in such an ontological or epistemological philosophy. It is thus understandable that the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* and the Yogācāra tradition would have shared certain concepts in common. However, despite the fact that the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* and the Yogācāra tradition present several similar ideas, there seems to be no direct evidence of Yogācāric influence on the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra.*

It should be noted that the composition of the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, just as it was with the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, probably predated the great Yogācāra masters Asaṅga and Vasubandhu, who comprehensively established the philosophical and psychological systems of the Yogācāra school. Given this historical background, the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* is not likely to have been exposed to a direct and overwhelming influence of the Yogācāra philosophy. Besides, the important terminologies of the Yogācāra philosophy, such as the five dharmas, the three svabhāvas, the eight vijñānas, and the twofold nairātmya cannot be found in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* in the manner that they appear in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra.* Yet, traces of Yogācāric influences are important defining-characteristic features found in the later period of the tathāgatagarbha tradition, and with regard to this, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* is without doubt the representative work marking this doctrinal development.

CHAPTER THREE

TATHĀGATAGARBHA DOCTRINE IN THE *LAṄKĀVATĀRASŪTRA* (1) ——TATHĀGATANAIRĀTMYAGARBHA

Throughout the discussion on the tathāgatagarbha tradition, the claims of self/ātman and non-empty/aśūnya were seen as striking and distinctive features. The compound "tathāgatanairātmyagarbha" found in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* suggested that the tathāgatagarbha teaching accorded well with the teaching of no-self/nairātmya and emptiness/śūnyatā, terms that are exactly the opposite to ātman and aśūnya. The compound "tathāgata-nairātmya-garbha," according to the context from which it is extracted, aims to indicate that the teaching of tathāgatagarbha is entirely different from the theory of ātman held by the heretical philosophers. Rather, the teaching of tathāgatagarbha is to be understood under the doctrinal principle of nairātmya. For that reason, the "tathāgatanairātmyagarbha" found in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* can be seen as a modification occurring in the later period of the tathāgatagarbha tradition, as well as a return to the doctrine of "nairātmya" found in primitive Buddhism and of "śūnyatā" emphasized in Mahāyāna Buddhism. However, a thorough investigation will show that the "nairātmya" of tathāgatagarbha is the "nairātmya" of the Yogācāra, and further that the "śūnyatā" of tathāgatagarbha is, in the final analysis, non-emptiness claimed in both the Yogācāra School and the tathāgatagarbha tradition. As a first step to fathom the depths of this issue, it may be helpful to briefly review the development of the nairātmya doctrine.

As generally agreed, Primitive Buddhism established the doctrine of an-ātman (*nairātmya* in *Mahāyāna*) to refute the theory of ātman of traditional Brahmanism. In this very initial stage of the nairātmya doctrine, it is argued that both the transmigration of

saṁsāra and the attainment of nirvāṇa (i.e., the effects) are dependent upon causes and conditions. Within the phenomenal world what is impermanent and ever-changing, or what is not a self-dependent substance or what lacks an ever-abiding intrinsic nature (*svabhāva*) as an eternal and changeless existence can never be found. What is impermanent and ever-changing, or what is not a self-dependent substance, or what lacks an ever-abiding intrinsic nature (*svabhāva*) as an eternal and changeless existence that constitutes the fundamental teaching of nairātmya, had been valued ever since the very beginning of the Buddhist tradition. Actually, the fact of the "nairātmya of all beings" (*sarva dharmā anātmānaḥ*) is one of the "Three Dharma Signs" (*anitya*, *duḥkha* and *anātman*) that distinguishes genuine Buddhism from other religions. This primitive teaching of anātman/nairātmya is followed by most Buddhist traditions. For example, in the period of Sectarian Buddhism, even the Sarvāstivādin who argued that all dharmas possess svabhāva, still showed respect to the primitive teaching of anātman/nairātmya by claiming that "dharma is existent (*dharma-bhāva*) while ātman is inexistent."[68] In the period of Mahāyāna Buddhism, the two main schools of Madhyamaka and Yogācāra continued to make efforts in interpreting and deepening the teaching of *nairātmya*. It can be safely concluded that impermanence/anitya, suffering/duḥkha and non-self/nairātmya are indeed common doctrines among all Buddhist traditions.

However, the tathāgatagarbha tradition, which was established in the later period of Mahāyāna Buddhism, made a dramatic shift in explaining the traditional doctrine of nairātmya as an "expedient teaching" (*upāya*), while raising the ātman, namely the

[68] Among the theories of ātman discussed by various sects, an unusual example is that proposed by the Vātsīputrīya, who held that both dharma and ātman are existent. The Vātsīputrīya is belittled as "heresy disguised as Buddhism" exactly because it brought up the idea of the indescribable self (*anabhilāpya-pudgala*).

tathāgatagarbha to the "ultimate truth" (*paramārtha*). In fact, it can be seen that some scriptures compiled in the early stage of the tathāgatagarbha tradition equated the tathāgatagarbha directly to ātman. For example, the *Aṅgulimālasūtra* reads "All sentient beings possess tathāgatagarbha-ātman",[69] and the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* reads "Ātman is the very meaning of tathāgatagarbha; that all sentient beings possess Buddha nature is the very meaning of ātman."[70] Although the confirmation of the tathāgatagarbha as "ātman" may seem to be quite in contrast to "an-ātman" or "nairātmya" maintained from the very beginning of Primitive Buddhism, it should be pointed out that the term "ātman" in the context of the Tathāgatagarbha tradition is still a negation of the Brahmanical theory of ātman as negated by the historical Buddha.

In all probability, some Buddhist scholars in the later period (400-700 CE) of Mahāyāna Buddhism became concerned that the fundamental doctrine of an-ātman became less influential day by day, and thus there arose a crisis: The Dharma teaching of the *Āgama* was gradually being forgotten with time. Consequently, an intention to modify the tathāgatagarbha teaching to conform with "an-ātman" doctrine preached by the historical Buddha was incubated and finally expressed. Probably out of that intention, the expression "tathāgata-nairātmya-garbha" was composed in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* in order to differentiate the tathāgatagarbha from Brahmanical ātman and to insist on the consistency between the teachings of tathāgatagarbha and nairātmya. Moreover, the Buddhist terms "śūnyatā," "niḥsvabhāva," etc., are none other than various statements of the tathāgatagarbha. In other words, the bringing out of the term "tathāgata-nairātmya-garbha,"

[69] "一切衆生皆有如來藏我," see 央掘摩羅經 in T.2, p.539c.

[70] "我者, 即是如來藏義; 一切衆生皆有佛性, 即是我義." See 大般涅槃經 Chapter Seven in T.12, p.407b. According to the textual research of Yin-shun, the first ten chapters of the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* were compiled in the initial stage of the tathāgatagarbha tradition, and thus should not be lumped together with the subsequent chapters that were compiled later.

within the ideological trend that emphasizes the substantial existence of the tathāgatagarbha, can be understood to be somewhat like an abrupt return to the traditional Buddha Dharma. The fusion of the tathāgatagarbha with nairātmya and with śūnyatā explicitly distinguishes the tathāgatagarbha teaching from the Brahmanic theory of ātman, and firmly places the tathāgatagarbha tradition within the whole scheme of orthodox Buddhism.

However, within this scheme wherein the tathāgatagarbha was fused with nairātmya and with śūnyatā, it may be inquired which of the notions is to be placed in the primary position and which is to be placed in the secondary position. To what extent does this "fusion" apply? Is the tathāgatagarbha completely identical to nairātmya and śūnyatā? Does tathāgatagarbha accord perfectly with nairātmya and śūnyatā? It should be observed that the meanings of certain Buddhist terms often change over time and with the various claims of different schools. Therefore, it should be carefully discerned whether the nairātmya of the "tathāgata-nairātmya-garbha" agrees with the "an-ātman" suggested in Primitive Buddhism, or with the "niḥsvabhāva" insisted upon by the Madhyamaka School, or with the "two kinds of nairātmya" claimed by the Yogācāra School. A similar and relevant question is whether the "śūnyatā" of the tathāgatagarbha is the śūnyatā defined by the Madhyamaka School or is the śūnyatā used in a Yogācāra sense.

To systematically respond to the questions above, the contents of this chapter have been divided into the following four major divisions and their respective subdivisions.

1) A Brief Review of the Development of the Nairātmya Doctrine
   - I "An-ātman" in Primitive Buddhism
   - II. "Niḥsvabhāva" in Madhyamaka School
   - III. "Twofold Nairātmya" in Yogācāra School

2) Relationship between Tathāgatagarbha and Nairātmya Found in the

Laṅkāvatārasūtra

I. Tathāgatagarbha is Different from Ātman

II. Tathāgatagarbha is in Accord with Nairātmya

III. Tathāgatagarbha and Śūnyatā are in Agreement

3) The Tathāgatagarbha and the "Real and Eternal Mind-only"

I. Tathāgatagarbha is Essentially "Genuine Ātman"

II. Tathāgatagarbha is Essentially Aśūnya

4) Conclusion

Now in order to comprehend precisely the meaning of "tathāgata-nairātmya-garbha" expounded in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, we shall now turn to a brief review of the development of the nairātmya doctrine.

1) A Brief Review of the Development of the Nairātmya Doctrine

The meaning of the term nairātmya differs from tradition to tradition. The manner in which various traditions have interpreted the term may not contradict sharply with one another, and different emphases and nuanced viewpoints may be found in the interpretations suggested at different times by different traditions.

Ⅰ. "An-ātman" in Primitive Buddhism

First, for Primitive Buddhism, the doctrine of nairātmya is claimed as a refutation of the belief in an ever-abiding, independent, and real ātman (self) broadly accepted by other religions of India around the time of the historical Siddhārtha. According to Primitive Buddhism, no such existence of ātman can be found either inside or outside the mind or body of sentient beings. The teaching of nairātmya found in *Āgama* and taught to the śrāvaka disciples aims to refute the belief in the existence of ātman. In this sense, nairātmya is exactly a synonym for the term "an-ātman."

It is repeatedly explained and emphasized in the *Āgama* that the mind and body are

no more than a temporary composite of the five aggregates. The continuation and transformation of life and death are completely dependent upon causes and conditions. Neither the ātman that is assumed to be pure, luminous, joyful or the pudgala that is assumed to be eternal, changeless, and ever-abiding can possibly exist either inside or outside the five aggregates in any credible form. Therefore, the nairātmya expounded in Primitive Buddhism laid special emphasis on the term "pudgala-nairātmya," i.e., a sentient being consists of a composite of the five aggregates, each of which is endlessly changing according to the principle of co-dependent origination (*pratītya-samutpāda*) wherein no eternal, changeless substance composing the ātman or the pudgala could possibly be found.

Ⅱ. "Niḥsvabhāva" in Madhyamaka School

The scope of the teaching of anātman/nairātmya expanded with the rise of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Compared to Primitive Buddhism and Sectarian Buddhism, which emphasized the aspect of the non-substantiality of self (*anātman/pudgala-nairātmya*), the early stages of the Mahāyāna Buddhism, namely from the compilation of the *Prajñāpāramitāsūtra* to the Madhyamaka School established by Nāgārjuna, inherited the fundamental claim of anātman/pudgala-nairātmya on the one hand and on the other hand greatly emphasized the system of niḥsvabhāva (non-intrinsic-nature) of all beings –i.e., the teaching of dharma-nairātmya.

For the Madhyamaka School, nairātmya is synonymous with niḥsvabhāva (no-intrinsic-nature) which in this context means that all beings, both conditioned and unconditioned, simply arise co-dependently and thus are devoid of an intrinsic nature that is ever-abiding and independent. In other words, nairātmya is the ultimate truth of śūnyatā.

To sum up, it can be said that the interpretations of nairātmya as found in Primitive

Buddhism and the Madhyamaka School appear similar; however, there is a fine difference in nuance between the expositions of both traditions that has been noted above. Although Nāgārjuna, the founder of the Madhyamaka School, seemed to be faithful to the original teaching of Primitive Buddhism, he actually extended the scope of this theory. When referring to anātman, Primitive Buddhism was focused on the body and mind of sentient beings and it was established that by means of analysis ātman could not be found either inside or outside the five aggregates constituting sentient beings. Therefore, it can be concluded that anātman of Primitive Buddhism was a denial of ātman. The Madhymaka, on the other hand, extended the principle of nairātmya to include not only sentient beings but also all kinds of beings. Just as a sentient being is devoid of an eternal and independent ātman, so too are all beings devoid of an eternal and independent intrinsic nature. Thus, nairātmya, according to Madhyamaka, is the denial of intrinsic nature. Although the terms "ātman" (self) and svabhāva (intrinsic nature) are similar in their definition of eternality and independence, they differ in the dimension of their application. Ātman refers only to sentient beings while svabhāva (intrinsic nature) is related to a broader scope of all beings. Therefore, the term "ātman" bears in itself a sense of free will, which is not implied in the term "svabhāva" (intrinsic nature).

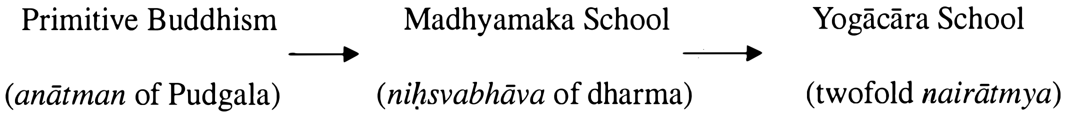
In addition, nairātmya claimed by Nāgārjuna was meant to correct the doctrine of the Sarvāstivādins, who claimed that ātman was non-existent while the dharmas, for instance, each of the five aggregates composing a sentient being were existent. Consequently, within the context of the Mahāyāna notion of nairātmya, anātman of Primitive Buddhism can be understood to be focused on pudgala-nairātmya, while the Madhyamaka emphasis on niḥsvabhāva can be understood to be focused on the aspects of

both dharma-nairātmya and pudgala-nairātmya, but as a response to the Sarvāstivādins it can be understood as a negation of the existence of dharma – i.e., dharma-nairātmya.

Ⅲ. **"Twofold Nairātmya" in Yogācāra School**

"Nairātmya," as interpreted by the Yogācāra tradition, at first glance may appear similar to what was explained by primitive Buddhism and the Madhyamaka tradition. The Yogācāra tradition, also known as a School of Mind-only/citta-mātra, holds that all phenomena are merely the information/manifestation (*vijñapti-mātra*) of the mind. While various phenomena are unreal just like a mirage, the mind itself must be real. It is based on this thesis of mind-only that the doctrine of twofold ātman is established.

It was, however, the doctrine of anātman that developed into the "twofold nairātmya" – i.e., pudgala-nairātmya and dharma-nairātmya – and that became a comprehensive and systematic teaching that marked the Yogācāra School.[71]



What can be inferred from the above diagram is that, the term "nairātmya" in a narrow sense indicates an-ātman (*pudgala-nairātmya*) as suggested in primitive Buddhism, while in a broader sense it indicates a twofold nairātmya – pudgala-nairātmya and dharma-nairātmya – of which ātman/pudgala-nairātmya is claimed by all Buddhist traditions while niḥsvabhāva/dharma-nairātmya and twofold nairātmya are emphasized and advocated by the Mahāyāna.

It should be noted that for the Yogācāra tradition, nairātmya is established on the basis

[71] For example, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* that is greatly influenced by the Yogācāra School is characterized by the teaching of the five dharma, threefold svabhāva, eight vijñāna and twofold nairātmya.

of vijñapti-mātra (information/representation-only), which means that all living individuals and non-living objects have been imagined and are merely manifestations of the mind. Ultimately it is only on the mind (*citta-mātra*) on which all information/representations rely. The imagined-self constructed from the mind is non-existent, while the mind itself is real and existent. This is the reason that in his work *The Twenty Verses and Their Commentaries (Viṁśatikā)*, Vasubhandu discusses nairātmya in the context of the imagined-self but not in the context of the real and indescribable self, which is the realm of the Buddha.[72]

Here we find that, first, the unreal mind constructed or imagined is the imagined-ātman (*kalpitātman*). Second, the real mind free of an imagined-ātman is named anabhilāpyātman or the indescribable-self. The former as an imagined and unreal self must be denied, while the latter as a perfect and real self, though ineffable, must be existent and accepted. If a real self of a clear mind should be denied, then that on which all rely will collapse. This would mean that the myriads of phenomena will thereby disappear. This is the reason that the Yogācārins, as the followers of mind-only, denied the imagined-self of kalpitātman to indicate the path to awakening and established the real self of anabhilāpyātman in order not to fall into nihilism.

Thus, within the Yogācāra, nairātmya should be understood in the context of kalpitātman instead of anabhilāpyātman. The kalpitātman may appear as any imagined or constructed form of self. A typical example is the ātman denied by Primitive Buddhism. The intrinsic nature (*svabhāva*) denied by Madhyamaka is another form of kalpitātman, since intrinsic nature as-such is hypothesized and thus non-existent. The three terms –

[72] The Sanskrit version reads: "*tena kalpitenātmanā, teṣām nairātmyaṁ, na tv anabhilāpyenātmanā, yo buddhānāṁ viṣaya*" See S. Lévi, *Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi, Deux traité de Vasubandhu, Viṁśatikā (La Vingtaine) et Triṁśikā (La Trentaine)*, Paris: Librairie "Ancienne Honoré Champion, 1925. p.6, lines 17-18.

"kalpitātman," "svabhāva" (intrinsic nature), and "ātman" – share the basic same feature of being "like an illusion" (*māyopama*). However eternal and independent they may appear to be, they are essentially imaginary. Although they differ in dimension, the three terms basically imply the similar characteristics of appearing as something existent and permanent, characteristics negated by Buddhism when it insists on the principle of nairātmya.

The range of meaning between the words "kalpitenātmanā," "svabhāva" (intrinsic nature), and "ātman" differ. When insisting on anātman, Primitive Buddhism was focused on the anātman of pudagala and thus denied the existence of ātman. The Madhyamaka emphasized the aspect of niḥsvabhāva of dharma, which denied the existence of elements (*dharma-nairātmya*), and the Yogācāra tradition, as a comprehensive effort, established a twofold nairātyma which denied both ātman and dharma simultaneously. According to the Yogācāra tradition, the Śrāvaka and Pratyekabuddha merely cut off their hindrance of passion so as to realize pudgala-nairātmya, and the Buddha alone cuts off the twofold hindrance of passion (*kleśāvaraṇa*) and knowledge (*jñeyāvaraṇa*) in order to realize the twofold-nairātmya.

Anabhilāpyenātmanā, on the other hand, marks a very different development from Primitive Buddhism and the Madhyamaka tradition. By claiming the ever-abiding indispensability of an ineffable ātman, which is the realm of Buddha (a synonym of parinispanna and also the thoroughly purified mind of Āmala-vijñāna), the Yogācāra tradition seems to go beyond the principle of anātman/ nairātmya established in Primitive Buddhism, and it is also contrasted against the Madhyamaka that maintains that even the unconditioned dharma is co-dependent and without intrinsic nature.

2) Relationship between Tathāgatagarbha and Nairātmya Found in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*

The tathāgatagarbha tradition declares that the ultimately luminous and pure tathāgatagarbha is originally possessed by all sentient beings. This tathāgatagarbha is the support of all existences as well as the basis upon which all sentient beings attain Buddhahood or are originally Buddhas by nature. The attributes of this tathāgatagarbha may seem to resemble the Ātman claimed by Brahmanism, but they diverge from the principle of anātman described in Primitive Buddhism. Moreover, the tathāgatagarbha is assumed to be the ultimate support upon which both worldly saṁsāra and transcendental nirvāṇa are established. Therefore, the tathāgatagarbha that is absolute and eternal is completely stable and constant. The stability and permanence of the tathāgatagarbha is beyond dispute because if the tathāgatagarbha could be extinguished, then we would be in a state of nihilism in which all existences would lose their substantial basis. The claim that the tathāgatagarbha refers to a permanent existence is the reason that the tathāgatagarbha tradition is a branch of the You-zong (有宗), or the Chinese Buddhist school focused on "existence." It is owing to the emphasis on "ultimate existence" that the tathāgatagarbha tradition is distinguished from the other Buddhist tradition that adheres to the system of "śūnyatā" of all existences. As a result, there arose this question: If the tathāgatagarbha is understood in the sense of Ātman, what then is the difference between the tathāgatagarbha teaching and the theory of Ātman? Moreover, because the tathāgatagarbha implies some sort of absolute "existence", in what sense can the tathāgatagarbha be understood so as to be consistent with the doctrine of "śūnyatā" broadly accepted by other Buddhist traditions? Solutions to these questions seem imperative to the discussion on the tathāgatagarbha tradition. One solution proposed by the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* is that "... the tathāgata-

nairātmya-garbha should be understood by you, in order to abandon the viewpoint of the heretical philosophers."[73] It can be said that the term "tathāgata-nairātmya-garbha" was coined by the author of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* to blend "tathāgatagarbha" with "nairātmya" that was insisted upon by the other Buddhist traditions.

I. Tathāgatagarbha is Different from Ātman

The description of the tathāgatagarbha as seen in many scriptures is usually similar to that of the Ātman believed in by the Brahmanical religions. Such blending of the tathāgatagarbha with Ātman might appear unusual to some Mahāyānists who insist on the original intention of the Buddha Dharma to be a system of anātman. Consequently, Mahāmati the bodhisattva, in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, asks this question on behalf of the public:

> The tathāgata-garbha that is expounded in the sūtra as naturally pure, always inexhaustible, not having transformation, possessing the thirty two excellent characteristics, dwelling within the bodies of all sentient beings, wrapped in the filthy cloth of skandhas, dhātus, and āyatanas, polluted by the defilements of erroneous discriminations of greed, hatred, and delusion is just like the precious jewel hidden in one's clothes. Is not tathāgata-garbha taught by the Venerable One [i.e., the Buddha] the same as the ātman which the heretical philosophers expound as the atman that is the eternal creator, the omnipresent,[74] unconditioned,[75] and

[73] "... tīrthakar adṛṣṭivinivṛtty-arthaṁ, tathāgata-nairātmya-garbhānusāriṇā ca te bhavitavyam". (Nanjio edition, p.79 lines 8-9), The Tang version reads: "If you want to abandon the viewpoint of heretical philosophers, you should understand anātman in the sense of tathāgatanairātmyagarbha" (若欲離於外道見者, 應知無我如來藏義) see T.16, p.599b.

[74] The Sanskrit original of this word is "vibhus" (in Nanjio edition, p.77), which is translated by Suzuki as "omnipresent". The Song version (in T.16, p.489a) and the Wei verion (in T.16, p.529b) translated is as "周遍", which is in accordance with the Sanskrit version, while the Tang version (in T.16, p.599b) translated it as "自在", which means "unrestricted" or "freedom."

[75] The Sanskrit original of this word is "nirguṇa" (Nanjio edition, p.77), which has been translated by Suzuki as "unqualified". The Song version (in T.16, p.489a) and the Tang version (in T.16, p.599b) translated nirguṇa as "離於求那", which is a combination of a translation into the Chinese language and a transliteration of the Sanskrit term, the result of which must have appeared weird to the general Chinese

imperishable?[76]

The "sūtra" mentioned above is probably the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, wherein it is mentioned:

> In the midst of the defilements of greed, hatred and ignorance, are all sentient beings with tathāgata-wisdom, tathāgata-eyes, and tathāgata-body seated cross-legged solemnly and motionlessly..... tathāgatagarbha, eternal and without defilement, possessing all virtues and supreme characteristics is just like me".[77]

Since the tathāgatagarbha possesses within itself all of the perfect virtues and characteristics of the tathāgata, how does it differ from the Ātman that is unconditional, omnipresent, and imperishable? Moreover, since both tathāgatagarbha and Ātman are similarly wrapped within the imperfect and defiled body and mind, how do practice and emancipation theories differ between the tathāgatagarbha tradition and other religions?

It is not surprising that when the tathāgatagarbha teaching was prevalent some Mahāyānists had such doubts and investigated the difference between the tathāgatagarbha and Ātman. Furthermore, they probed into what definitely constituted the borderline between the tathāgatagarbha teaching and Brahmanism. It is in response to such queries that the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* clearly claims: "The tathāgatagarbha taught by me is different

reader. The Wei version (in T.16, p.529b) translated it as "naturally existent without depending upon conditions" (不依諸緣, 自然而有), which is somewhat more understandable.

[76] My translation is based on the Tang version which reads: "修多羅中說如來藏本性清淨, 常恒不斷, 無有變易, 具三十二相, 在於一切眾生身中, 爲蘊界處垢衣所纏, 貪恚癡等妄分別垢之所污染, 如無價寶在垢衣中. 外道說我是常作者, 離於求那, 自在無滅. 世尊所說如來藏義, 豈不同於外道我耶?" See T.16, p.599b.

[77] "一切眾生, 貪欲、恚、癡諸煩惱中, 有如來智、如來眼、如來身, 結跏趺坐, 儼然不動……有如來藏常無染污, 德相備足, 如我無異," see *Da-Fang-Deng-Ru-Lai-Zang-Jing* (大方等如來藏經) , in T.16, p.457b~c. See also, Michael Zimmermann, op. cit., pp. 102-05 and notes 50-65. The passage here seems to correspond to his translation on p., 103-05: '... in the same way, sons of a good family, also the Tathāgata, the Honorable One and Perfectly Awakened One, [perceives] with his insight (*prajñā*), knowledge (*jñāna*), and tathāgata-vision (see his note 55 for details) that all sentient beings are encased in myriads of defilements [such as] desire (*rāga*), anger (*dveṣa*), misguidedness (*moha*), longing (*tṛṣṇā*), and ignorance (*avidyā*).... inside sentient beings ... sit many thatāgatas, cross legged ... motionless and unaffected by any of the states of existences, then say "Those tathāgatas are just like me!"

from the Ātman expounded by the outsiders".[78]

However, since the tathāgatagarbha is other than Ātman, why is the tathāgatagarbha depicted in such a manner so as to be similar to the latter? The *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* explains that the tathāgatagarbha teaching is an expedient teaching directed towards two kinds of sentient beings – 1) the foolish persons who felt suspicious and fearful about the teaching of nairātmya, and 2) the heretics who clung to the theory of Ātman. Regarding the first kind of sentient beings, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* states,

> The Fully Enlightened Tathāgatas as Arhants, in order to make the foolish persons (*bālānām*) cast aside their fears of nairātmya (*nairātmya-saṁtrāsapadavivarjanārthaṁ*), expound by means of a teaching commencing with tathāgatagarbha (*tathāgatagarbhamukhopadeśena*) that reveal non-discrimination and imagelessness (*nirvikalpanirābhāsagocaraṁ*)".[79]

Ordinary persons are inclined to regard the doctrine of nairātmya as nihilism and thus denying the existence of life, fear and reject the teaching of nairātmya. For such sentient beings, the tathāgatas preliminarily expound the teachings of the tathāgatagarbha that are eternal, joyful, self-existent, and pure in order to cater to their mindset and then induce them to non-discrimination and imagelessness. As for the second kind of sentient beings, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* states,

> ... the doctrine of the tathāgatagarbha is expounded in order that the heretics who cling to the theory of Ātman, so that their minds that have fallen into the views imagining the non-existent Ātman as real and also into the notion that the triple emancipation is final, rapidly may be awakened to the supreme enlightenment,

[78] "我說如來藏, 不同外道所說之我," in *Da-Sheng-Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing* 大乘入楞伽經, see T.16, p.599b.

[79] The Sanskrit version reads: "tathāgatā arhantaḥ samyaksaṁbuddhā bālānāṁ nairātmya-saṁtrāsapadavivarjanārthaṁ, nirvikalpanirābhāsagocaraṁ tathāgatagarbhamukhopadeśena deśayanti". See Nanjio edition, p.78 lines 8-12 and D.T. Suzuki, *The Lankavatara Sutra*, p. 69. All three Chinese translations are too terse to convey the meaning completely. For example, the Tang version reads: "爲令愚夫離無我怖, 說無分別、無影像處如來藏門," see T.16, p.599b.

without superior".[80]

This means, that with respect to the followers of the Brahmanical tradition who believed in the existence of an eternal Ātman and who inevitably found the teaching of anātman incredible, the teaching of tathāgatagarbha that resembled their theory of Ātman was employed by the Buddhists as an expedient means (*upāya*). Once the heretics accepted the Buddha Dharma, they spontaneously renounced the false imagination of Ātman and realized the supreme enlightenment, without superior.

Two points can be concluded in this section according to what has been mentioned above. First, the tathāgatagarbha explained in the Buddhist scriptures is essentially different from the Ātman suggested by Brahmanical traditions, even though they are depicted to be very much alike. Second, the teaching of the tathāgatagarbha is not the ultimate and final teaching, but is the expedient and conventional teaching utilized to lead foolish persons and heretics to realize the Buddha Dharma. That is to say, the tathāgatagarbha doctrine discussed in this section is seen as a temporary teaching taught to fools and heretics and was not a teaching meant for wise and long-versed Buddhists.

Ⅱ. Tathāgatagarbha is in Accordance with Nairātmya

As mentioned above, in the very initial stage of the tathāgatagarbha tradition, the tathāgatagarbha was viewed as Ātman and its supreme virtues were highly praised. For instance, the *Aṅgulimālasūtra* states, "all sentient beings [who] possess tathāgatagarbha-

[80] See D.T. Suzuki, *The Lankavatara* Sutra, p. 69. This translation accords with the Sanskrit version (in Nanjio edition, p.79, line 4), wherein the section "fallen into the notion that the triple emancipation is final" (vimokṣatrayagocarapatitāśayopetāḥ) together with "fallen into the views imagining the non-existent Ātman as real" (abhūtātmavikalpadṛṣṭipatitāśayā) indicates the mindset of the heretics. See Nanjio edition, p.79 line 3-4. However, all the three Chinese versions seems to translate "vimokṣatrayagocara-patitāśayopetāḥ" as "to make the heretics enter the realm of triple emancipation", which is very different from the Sanskrit version. For example, the Song version reads: "開引計我諸外道故, 說如來藏, 令離不實我見妄想, 入三解脫門境界, 悕望疾得阿耨多羅三藐三菩提", see T.16, p.489b.

ātman ... eliminate all afflictions thus they see the realm of Ātman." [81] The *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* precisely declares that the teaching of nairātmya is an expedient teaching, while that of Ātman is the final teaching:

> Although it has been expounded that all dharmas are nairātmya, they are not nairātmya. So, what is Ātman? When a dharma is substantial, is real, is eternal, is the master, is the support, and is changeless by nature, this is called, "Ātman".[82]

Quite opposite to the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* that directly advocated the theory of Ātman and even confused its doctrinal stance with that of Brahmanism, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* not only differentiates the tathāgatagarbha from Ātman, but goes a step further to explain that the tathāgatagarbha within the whole doctrinal system of Buddhism parallels the doctrine of nairātmya. In other words, tathāgatagarbha and nairātmya point toward the same purpose but by different means. The passages below taken from the various versions of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* illustrate this point well.

1. The tathāgatas have expounded ***dharmanairātmya*** that removes all traces of the defining-characteristics of discrimination by various skilful means issuing from their transcendental wisdom, sometimes by the doctrine of the tathāgatagarbha [and] sometimes by the doctrine of nairātmya……through the use of various terms, expressions, and synonyms.[83]
2. The ***dharmanairātmya*** freed from all the traces of false imagination is explained by various skilful means issuing from the transcendental wisdom, sometimes by

[81] "一切眾生皆有如來藏我……斷一切煩惱, 故見我界", See 央掘摩羅經 in T.2, pp.539c~540a.
[82] "說言諸法無我, 實非無我. 何者是我? 若法是實, 是真, 是常, 是主, 是依, 性不變易者, 是名爲我". See 大般涅槃經, T.12, p.379a.
[83] This translation is basically that of Suzuki, Daisetz Teitaro (tr.) *The Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra.* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1966. See also Taiwan Reprint, *The Lankavatara Sutra – A Mahayana Text*, Taipei: SMC Publishing Inc. 1991, p. 69. For the Sanskrit text, See Nanjio edition of *The Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*, p.78. tathāgatās tad eva dharmanairātmyaṁ sarvavikalpalakṣānavinivṛttaṁ vividhaiḥ prajñopāyakauśalyayogair garbhopadeśena vā nairātmyopadeśena vā……citraiḥ padavyañjanaparyāyair deśayante.

expounding the tathāgatagarbha [and] sometimes by expounding nairātmya.[84]

3. The ***dharmanairātmya*** freed from the characteristics of discrimination is explained by skilful means issuing from the transcendental wisdom [and] is named tathāgatagarbha, sometimes by the doctrine of nairātmya, sometimes by the doctrine of reality-limit, nirvāṇa, etc. revealed by various names, phrases and sentences.[85]

4. The ***nairātmyadharma*** freed from the characteristics of all erroneous discriminations is expounded by various skilful means issuing from the transcendental wisdom, sometimes by the doctrine of the tathāgatagarbha [and] sometimes by doctrine of nairātmya, by means of various names and words different from one another.[86]

5. Even the tathāgatas by means of that very different skilful means issuing from transcendental wisdom that transforms all of the defining-characteristics of the discrimination of ***dharmanairātmya*** expounds the tathāgatagarbha as the doctrine of nairātmya by using various synonyms of words and letters, just as a potter [uses various materials such as water, clay and so on].[87]

Slight discrepancies are found among the five version;[88] however, in summary,

[84] 於無我法, 離一切妄想相, 以種種智慧善巧方便, 或說如來藏, 或說無我. (Song version) in *Leng-Qie-A-Ba-Duo-Luo-Bao-Jing* 楞伽阿跋多羅寶經,, see T.16, p.489b.

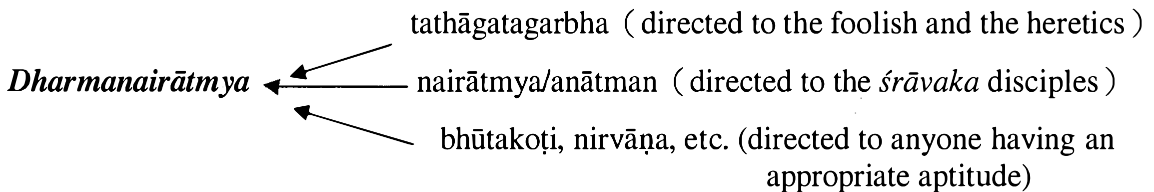
[85] 彼法無我, 離諸一切分別之相, 智慧巧便, 說名如來藏, 或說無我, 或說實際及涅槃等, 種種名字章句示現. (Wei version) in *Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing* 入楞伽經, see T.16, p.529c.

[86] 於遠離一切分別相無我法中, 以種種智慧方便善巧, 或說如來藏, 或說爲無我, 種種名字各各差別. (Tang version) in *Da-Sheng-Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing* 大乘入楞伽經, see T.16, p.599b.

[87] de bzhin gshegs pa rnams kyang chos la bdag med pa'i rnam par rtog pa'i mtshan nyid thams cad rnam par log pa de nyid shes rab dang thabs la mkhas pa dang ldan pa rnam pa sna tshogs kyis de bzhin gshegs pa'i snying por bstan pa 'am / bdag med par bstan pas kyang rung ste / rdza mkhan bzhin du tshig dang / yi ge'i rnam grangs rnam pa sna tshogs kyis ston to. (Tibetan version) in *ḥphags-pa laṅ-kar gśegs-paḥi theg-pa chen-poḥi mdo*, Peking edition of *Tibetan Tripitaka* Vol.29 p. 40, leaf 94b, line 7~leaf 95a~line 1, also see, sde-dge edition, vol. ca, leaf 86b, line 1-2 [document 22084049.PDF in Disk 5; leaf no 172 of the *bka' 'gyur sde dge 'i par ma*, New York: The Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center, hereafter "see TBRC"]

[88] The discrepancies are, first, the "dharmanairātmya" mentioned in Sanskrit, Song, Wei, and Tibetan versions appears in the Tang version as "nairātmyadharma." Generally speaking, "*dharmanairātmya*" means the absence of intrinsic nature in all things, while "nairātmyadharma" refers to the Dharma teaching of anātman in a narrow sense, or Dharma teaching of the twofold nairātmya in a broad sense. Doctrinally speaking, it may be assumed that the "nairātmyadharma" (無我法) in the Tang version is a misprint for "dharmanairātmya" (法無我) emphasized in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*. This is interesting because it emphasizes the teaching rather than the contents of nairātmya. Secondly, the Wei version compared to the

tathāgatagarbha and nairātmya, though different words, equally refer to the skillful means utilized to interpret the principle of dharmanairātmya. That is to say, in order to explain the doctrine of dharmanairātmya, different methods are utilized in accordance with different aptitude of the listener. The tathāgatagarbha adapted to the foolish and the heretics, together with the nairātmya adapted to the śrāvakas disciples, are similarly expedient teaching for the purpose of expounding dharmanairātmya. The doctrines of tathāgatagarbha and nairātmya, though seemingly contradictory at first glance, are actually directed toward the same purpose of dharma-nairātmya, but by different means.



In concluding this section it can be said that tathāgatagarbha accords well with the both doctrines of pudgala-nairātmya or anātman claimed in primitive Buddhism and dharma-nairātmya highly praised by the Mahāyāna traditions. Furthermore, it can be understood that tathāgata-nairātmya-garbha suggested in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* is a noticeable return to the main stream of nairātmya/anātman within the tathāgatagarbha tradition that is in agreement with the theory of ātman, but not with the ātman of the Brahmanical tradition

Ⅲ. Tathāgatagarbha and Śūnyatā are in Agreement

The tathāgatagarbha tradition prevailing in the later period of Mahāyāna Buddhism criticized the doctrine of sarva-dharma-śunyatā maintained by earlier Madhyamaka as an

other versions adds the terms "*bhūtakoṭi*" and "*nirvāṇa*," which may be additional clarification of the translator.

expedient teaching. According to some tathāgatagarbha scriptures, *sarva-dharma-śūnyatā* is not the final teaching, something aśūnya must be admitted beyond what is śūnya. For example, it is claimed in the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* that "'śūnyatā' means the negation of twenty five kinds of beings, as well as of all afflictions, all sufferings, all defining-characteristics, all conditioned things ... 'aśūnyatā' means the real and wholesome form [that is] permanence, joy, self, and purity, moveless and changeless."[89] Therefore, the conditioned dharmas of afflictions and suffering is śūnya, while the unconditional dharma, viz. the tathāgatagarbha, cannot be śūnya. The distinction between śūnyatā and aśūnyatā is indeed an important factor in making a division between early Mahāyāna of Madhyamaka and later Mahāyāna of the tathāgatagarbha tradition. Faced with this distinction, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* was obviously inclined to bridge 'śūnyatā' mainly advocated in the *Prajñāpāramitāsūtra* and 'aśūnyatā' which is the nature of tathāgatagarbha.

As discussed in the previous section, tathāgatagarbha is in accord with the doctrine of nairātmya, while the doctrine of nairātmya is closely related to the doctrine of śūnyatā. Following this trend of logic, the doctrine of tathāgatagarbha should be in agreement with the doctrine of śūnyatā. The *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* states:

1. Oh Mahāmati, the tathāgatas have expounded on tathāgatagarbha as comprising such meanings as emptiness, reality-limit, nirvāṇa, non-arising, non-objectivity, and freedom from desire.[90]

2. Sometimes it [tathāgatagarbha] is taught as śūnyatā, without-characteristic, wishlessness, suchness (*tathatā*), the extent of reality (*bhūtakoṭi*), reality-as-such (*dharmatā*), existential pattern (*dharma-kāya*), nirvāṇa, lacking self-nature

[89] "空者, 謂無二十五有, 及諸煩惱、一切苦、一切相、一切有爲行……不空者, 謂真實善色, 常樂我淨, 不動不變". See 大般涅槃經 chapter five in T.12, p.395b.

[90] See Nanjio edition of *The Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*, p.78, lines 6-8: tathāgatāḥ śūnyatābhūtakoṭinirvāṇānutpādānimittāpraṇihitādyānāṁ mahāmate padārthānāṁ tathāgatagarbhopadeśaṁ kṛtvā. (Sanskrit version)

(*niḥsvabhāva*), non-arising, non-extinguishing, originally tranquil, nirvāṇa-by-nature and so on. These terms are meant to expound tathāgatagarbha.[91]

3. Regarding the tathāgatagarbha taught by me, such dictions and phrases as śūnyatā, bhūtakoṭi, nirvāṇa, non-arising, non-extinguishing, lacking characteristics, wishlessness and so on, are expounded as tathāgatagarbha.[92]

4. Those tathāgatas who have truly realized Supreme Awakening expound tathāgatagarbha by explaining the meanings of such terms as śūnyatā-by-nature, bhūtakoṭi, nirvāṇa, non-arising, no-defining-characteristic, and wishlessness, and so on.[93]

5. Because the tathāgatas, Arhats, [and] Buddhas having realized the supreme awakening, having taught the meanings of terms such as śūnyatā, bhūtakoṭi, nirvāṇa, non-arising, non-defining-characteristic, and wishlessness, and so on as tathāgatagarbha ... [94]

Among the five versions above, the Sanskrit, Tang, and Tibetan versions are quite similar. The Wei version (No. 3) adds the diction "non-extinguishing." The Song version, which is the most compressed and concise among the three extant Chinese translations, departs from its ordinary style of translation and adds several terms. Despite these differences, the term "śūnyatā" is mentioned by all the versions.

The Song version, which is the most exhaustive in diction, can be understood as presenting the list "śūnyatā, without-characteristic, wishlessness" as the "three methods to

[91] in *Leng-Qie-A-Ba-Duo-Luo-Bao-Jing* 楞伽阿跋多羅寶經,, see T.16, p.489b. 有時說空, 無相, 無願, 如, 實際, 法性, 法身, 涅槃, 離自性, 不生, 不滅, 本來寂靜, 自性涅槃. 如是等句, 說如來藏已. (Song version)

[92] in *Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing* 入楞伽經, see T.16, p.529c. 我說如來藏, 空, 實際, 涅槃, 不生, 不滅, 無相, 無願等文辭章句, 說名如來藏. (Wei version)

[93] in *Da-Sheng-Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing* 大乘入楞伽經, see T.16, p.599b. 如來應等正覺, 以性空, 實際, 涅槃, 不生, 無相, 無願等諸句義說如來藏. (Tang version)

[94] *Ḥphags-pa laṅ-kar gśegs-paḥi theg-pa chen-poḥi mdo*, Peking edition of *Tibetan Tripitaka* Vol.29, p.40, leaf 94b, line 3-4. de bzhin gshegs pa dgra bcom pa yang dag par rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas rnams ni stong pa nyid dang / yang dag pa'i mtha' dang / mya ngan las 'das pa dang / ma skyes pa dang / mtshan ma med pa dang/ smon pa med pa la sogs pa'i tshig gi don rnams la / de bzhin gshegs pa'i snying por bstan par byas nas / (Tibetan version) Also see TBRC Disk 5, p 172 {86b line 4}

emancipation." It presents "tathatā", "bhūtakoṭi" and "dharmatā" as synonyms of śūnyatā according to the Madhyamaka School and "Dharma-kaya" is essentially identical to the tathāgatagarbha.[95] "Nirvāṇa" refers to the realm attained when śūnyatā has been realized. "Niḥsvabhāva," "non-arising," and "non-extinguishing" are synonyms of śūnyatā expounded in the Madhyamaka. The terms "originally tranquil" and "nirvāṇa by nature" can be seen often in the *Prajñāpāramitāsūtras.* In fact, this series of terms often appear in the *Prajñāpāramitāsūtra*s which advocate the śūnyatā of all dharmas, conditioned and unconditional. To cite only one example, it is stated in the *Mahāprajñāpāramitāsūtra* (大般若波羅蜜多經):

> The very profound meanings are: śūnyatā, no defining-characteristic, wishlessness, non-producing, non-arising, non-extinguishing, tranquility, nirvāṇa, tathatā, dharma-dhātu, dharmatā, bhūtakoṭi. These are the terms named "very profound meaning."[96]

A comparison of this quotation from the *Prajñāpāramitāsūtra* with that from the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* clearly indicates a similarity in diction. It can be assumed that the *Prajñāpāramitāsūtra* suggested śūnyatā as the most profound meaning, while the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* compiled later, followed this suit and took śūnyatā, non-characteristic, etc. as synonyms for the tathāgatagarbha. This indicates that the tathāgatagarbha teaching in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* directly inherited and did not contradict the profound teaching of śūnyatā advocated in the *Prajñāpāramitāsūtra*. In other words, the doctrine of śūnyatā, highly praised by the *Prajñāpāramitāsūtra* and the Madhyamaka School, is essentially

[95] According to the *Śrīmālādevisūtra*, the tathāgatagarbha is said to be entangled in defilements, while dharma-kāya is free of all entanglements. The tathāgatagarbha and the dharma-kāya differ only in their state, not in the intrinsic quality possessed by the both.

[96] "甚深義處, 謂空, 無相, 無願, 無作, 無生, 無滅, 寂靜, 涅槃, 真如, 法界, 法性, 實際. 如是等名甚深義處". See 大般若波羅蜜多經 *(Mahāprajñāparamitāsūtra)*, in T.7, p.269a.

analogous to the tathāgatagarbha suggested in later Mahāyāna, despite terminological differences.

Up to this point, it can be concluded that the doctrine of "tathāgata-nairātmya-garbha" as found in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* is contrary to the doctrine of "tathāgatagarbha-ātman" claimed in the initial stage of the tathāgatagarbha tradition. It can, however, be understood as a return to an-ātman suggested in primitive Buddhism or dharma-nairātyma advocated by Mahāyāna traditions. In addition, quite different from the early tathāgatagarbha tradition that criticized "sarva-dharma-śūnyatā" as an expedient-teaching and maintained the doctrinal stance of the You-zong (有宗), the sect emphasizing existence, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* seems to integrate śūnyatā and aśūnyatā, in order to state that the tathāgatagarbha is in accord with notions such as śūnyatā, no-defining-characteristic, etc. advocated in the *Prajñāpāramitāsūtra* and the Madhyamaka School.

3) Tathāgatagarbha and the "Real and Eternal Mind-only"

A temporary conclusion according to the above discussion can be reached as follows: In the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, the tathāgatagarbha doctrine is an expedient teaching intended for certain level of mentality of sentient beings, even though the depths of the tathāgatagarbha doctrine accord well with nairātmya and śūnyatā. In this case, according to Chinese Buddhist tradition, the doctrinal standpoint of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* is supposed to resemble that of "Kong-zong/空宗," the sect that emphasizes śūnyatā. However, a further closer investigation reveals differences.

Fa-zang (法藏), the eminent Buddhist scholar of the Tang Dynasty, classified the Buddhist teaching into four groups:

1) the Existent-characteristic school (You-xiang-zong/有相宗) based on Hīnayāna

teaching;

2) the No-characteristic school (Wu-xiang-zong/ 無相宗) based on the *Prajñāpāramitāsūtra* and the Madhyamaka commentaries;

3) the Dharma-characteristic school (Fa-xiang-zong/ 法相宗) based on the Yogācāra teaching, and

4) the Genuine-characteristic school (Shi-xiang-zong/ 實相宗) based on the tathāgatagarbha doctrine.

Among these, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* is categorized as belonging to the fourth group.[97] It is also stated by Fa-zang that "the so-called 'five dharmas,' 'three svabhāva,' 'eight vijñāna' and 'twofold śūnyatā' are all established upon the self-mind of tathāgatagarbha as the correct understanding of the Mahāyānists."[98] Similarly, Yin-shun (印順) classified the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* into the category of "real and eternal mind-only," which is to be distinguished from the texts belonging to the categories "śūnyatā but name-only" and "illusionary but vijñāpti-only."

"Real and eternal mind-only" is the fundamental basis of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*. Furthermore, the "mind" maintained and discussed therein is the clear and pure mind of the tathāgatagarbha. Therefore, "nairātmya" and "śūnyatā," related to the tathāgatagarbha as discussed above, should be considered in the context of the doctrinal system of "real and eternal mind-only" so that we will be able to see the whole picture and grasp the original intention. In order to accomplish that, the following discussion will be divided into two topics:

I. Tathāgatagarbha is Essentially "Genuine Ātman"

[97] See the details in *Ru-Leng-Qie-Xin-Xuan-Yi* (入楞伽心玄義), in 卍 Vol. 25, pp.410b~411a, Taipei: Xinwenfeng 新文豐, 1994.

[98] "所謂五法, 三性, 八識, 二空, 莫不皆於自心如來藏, 立爲學大乘者生正見處". The "twofold śūnyatā/二空" mentioned by Fa-zong is namely the "twofold nairātmya/二無我". Ibid. p.409b.

II. Tathāgatagarbha is Essentially Aśūnya

I. Tathāgatagarbha is Essentially "Genuine Ātman"

It should be noticed that in the context of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, the following verse is declared after the conclusion "The tathāgata-nairātmya-garbha should be understood by you in order to abandon the viewpoints of the heretical philosophers," in order to reiterate this teaching:

1) Personality, continuity, the [five] aggregates, causality,
atoms, supreme spirit, ruler, creator are mind-only discrimination.[99]

2) The person, continuity, aggregates, causation, atoms, supreme spirit, ruler, creator,
are erroneously conceived by the mind.[100]

3) The person, Ātman and aggregates, causations and atoms, intrinsic nature, ruler,
creator, are erroneous discrimination of mind-only.[101]

4) The person, continuity, aggregates, causations and atoms, supreme, ruler, creator,
these are nothing but mental discrimination.[102]

5) The person, continuity, aggregates, in the same manner, causations, atoms, supreme
spirit, ruler, creator are discriminated in mind-only.[103]

Candrakīrti, the eminent Madhyamaka scholar, in his work *Madhyamakāvatāra (Dbu-ma-la hjug-pa)* explained the import of the above verses as follows:

> Those [ideas of] pudgala etc. of heretical philosophers,
> the Buddha perceives them as not being a creator,

[99] See the Nanjio edition of *The Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*, p.79, lines 11-12.
pudgalaḥ saṁtatiḥ skandhāḥ pratyayā aṇavastathā,
pradhānam īśvaraḥ kartā cittamātraṁ vikalpyate.
(Sanskrit version)

[100] in *Leng-Qie-A-Ba-Duo-Luo-Bao-Jing* 楞伽阿跋多羅寶經,, see T.16, p.489b. 人、相續、陰、緣與微塵、勝、自在、作, 心量妄想 (Song version)

[101] in *Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing* 入楞伽經, see T.16, p.529c. 人、我及於陰, 眾緣與微塵, 自性、自在、作, 唯心妄分別. (Wei version)

[102] in *Da-Sheng-Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing* 大乘入楞伽經, see T.16, p.599b. 士夫、相續、蘊, 眾緣及微塵, 勝、自在、作者, 此但心分別. (Tang version)

[103] *Ḥphags-pa laṅ-kar gśegs-paḥi theg-pa chen-poḥi mdo*, Peking edition of *Tibetan Tripitaka* Vol.29, p.40, leaf 95a, lines 6-7 See also TBRC Disk 5, p. 172, folio 86b, lines 6-7.
/ gang zag rgyun dang phung po dang // de bzhin rkyen dang rdul dag dang /
/ gtso bo dbang po byed pa dag // sems tsam pa la rnam par brtags /(Tibetan version)

[but] teaches that the creator of the world is mind-only. [104]

The *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* is assuredly a text on the teaching of mind-only, and this is why Candrakīrti (560~640) as a Madhyamaka scholar regarded it as an expedient-teaching and not an ultimate teaching. According to the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, notions such as pudgala, pradhāna, īśvara, and so on maintained by other religions are essentially mental imaginations. Therefore, mind-only is real, while all else is not real.

As discussed above, the underlying principle of anātman or pudgala-nairātmya is universally admitted by most Buddhist traditions. However, the methods adopted to demonstrate pudgala-nairātmya are entirely different between scriptures such as the *Āgama* and the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra.* In the *Āgama*, each of the five aggregates is examined in order to establish that the self-existent Ātman or pudgala cannot possibly exist in any form. The *Āgama* claims that "the ātman that is one of the aggregates" and "the ātman that is separated from the aggregates" are nothing more than mistaken notions. The manner in which the ātman and the doctrine of pudgala-nairātmya on the basis of the aggregates of body and mind have been explained is undoubtedly empirical and practical. The *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, on the other hand, resorts to the doctrine of mind-only and infers that since all existences are only manifestations of one's own mind (*sva-citta-driśya-mātra*), the so-called ātman is nothing more than an imaginary notion manifested from one's own mind. Furthermore, being a product of false imagination, the ātman is unreal and lacks substantive existence. In order to verify the doctrine of an-ātma or pudgala-nairātmya by means of a metaphysical theory, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* approaches it metaphysically and

[104] mu stegs rnams kyi gang zag sogs de dag /
smras pa de dag byed por med gzigs nas //
rgyal bas sems tsam 'jig rten byed por gsungs //
See Peking edition of *Tibetan Tripitaka* Vol. 98, No. 5261, leaf 233a, line 3

transcendentally.

Although the conclusion of pudgala-nairātmya is reached by both the *Āgama* and the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, the significance of pudgala-nairātmya nevertheless differs between them due to the divergence in doctrine and the manner in which those texts explain them. The *Āgama*, by incorporating the five aggregates, viz. the basic components of life, into its discussion, verifies that ātman cannot exist inside the five aggregates that are empirically experienced and that it cannot exist in any unverifiable imagination or on the basis of some philosophical assumption. The ātman maintained in philosophical or theological meditation has been refuted by the Buddha and is imaginary and like an illusion. Therefore, the pudgala-nairātmya declared in Primitive Buddhism is a through and through radical theory of an-ātman that admits of no compromise despite its abstruse and recondite nature.[105] The *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, on the other hand, established the tathāgatagarbha teaching on the basis of the metaphysical assumption of mind-only, and as a result, the ātman is negated according to the principle of mind-only, but the "mind," established as the fundamental basis, cannot be negated. "Mind" in this context refers to "self-mind" or "*sva-citta*" (often mentioned in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*)[106] and also to the intrinsically pure tathāgatagarbha.

This inextinguishable "self-mind" found in the tathāgatagarbha doctrine is sometimes mentioned as the "genuine ātman" in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra.* For instance, in the sūtra we find such as expressions as the following:

> [The object] to be acted upon by the innermost Wisdom of Realization, characterized as the clear and pure genuine ātman, this is indeed the

[105] A controversial issue in the light of an-ātman or pudgala-nairātmya doctrine is this: how can the continuity of memory and of karma be possible? Although it was owing to this recondite nature of an-ātman that various opinions on the theory of ātman were suggested among sectarian Buddhism, the canonical literature firmly insisted on the teaching of nairātmya and never suggested any sort of ātman that existed in any transcendental form.

[106] As for example "*sva-citta*" in the expression "sva-citta-driśya-mātra".

> tathāgatagarbha.[107]

Or,

> The genuine ātman inside the aggregates cannot be known by the ignorant.[108]

Or,

> If there is no such genuine ātman, all these [pure dharmas] are inexistent...to teach that there is no genuine ātman is to slander the Dharma and to be attached to [the dualism of] being and non-being.[109]

Or,

> I explain that the genuine blazing ātman, just as when the kalpa-fire is ablaze, burns down the thick forest of an-ātman [and] separates [one] from the faults of heretical philosophers.[110]

	The Method of Expounding An-ātman/Pudgala-nairātmya	Extended Implication
Āgama	Through analysis of the Five Aggregates	Heretical Ātman as well as any form of "Genuine Ātman" are negated
Laṅkāvatārasūtra	On the basis of Mind-only	Heretical Ātman is negated but Ultimate Mind of the Genuine Ātman is affirmed

Generally, ancient Chinese scholars understood tathāgata-nairātmya-garbha by following the train of thought that the so-called nairātmya is not really nairātmya or an-

1 7 "內證智所行, 清淨真我相, 此即如來藏", in *Da-Sheng-Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing* 大乘入楞伽經, see T.16, p.637b.

108 "蘊中真實我, 無智不能知", in *Da-Sheng-Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing* 大乘入楞伽經,, see T.16, p.637c.

109 "若無此真我, 是等悉皆無說無真我者, 謗法對有無", in *Da-Sheng-Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing* 大乘入楞伽經, see T.16, p.637c-638a. The Wei version (*Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing* 入楞伽經) reads: "若陰中無我, 而此諸法等, 一切亦應無說無真如我, 惟是虛妄說", which means: If no genuine ātman exists within skandhas, all these [pure] dharmas should be non-existent...the teaching that there is no tathatā-ātman is only a false teaching. See T.16, p.583b

110 "說真我熾然, 猶如劫火起, 燒無我稠林, 離諸外道過", in *Da-Sheng-Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing* 大乘入楞伽經, see T.16, p.638a. The Wei version (*Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing* 入楞伽經) reads: "離諸外道過, 焚燒無我見,令(今)我見熾然, 如劫盡火炎(焱)", which means: [it] separates [one] from the faults of heretical philosophers, [and] burns down the view of an-ātman, now the view of ātman is blazing, just as the flame in the end of a kalpa. See T.16, p.583b

ātman, but that it signifies the real self or genuine ātman. For example, Shan-yue (善月), living in Song dynasty (960-1279), annotated tathāgata-nairātmya-garbha as follows:

> In [the context of] dharma-nairātmya, [I explain] that the tathāgatagarbha is the ātman possessing and demonstrating various virtues; this is truly the meaning of "genuine Ātman" ... [thus,] to compare tathāgatagarbha with the expression "an-ātman" is indeed [to make] tathāgatagarbha the Ātman ... in that case, to explain [tathāgatagarbha] as the ātman gives way to the conceptual ātman of the heretical philosophers [and this would mean that one] reaches the genuine Ātman on the basis of the mistaken ātman functioning as the cause.[111]

Similarly, Han-shi of the Qing dynasty, in his work *Leng Qie Jing Xin Yin* states:

> At first, the tathāgata taught an-ātman for the sake of sentient beings who clung to the five aggregates as the ātman. Again later, for the sake of the Śravakas who clung to the teaching of an-ātman and who were confused about self-nature ... in order to explain [to them] the genuine Ātman, when the tathāgata was explaining an-ātman, he dwelt as the genuine ātman.[112]

Finally, having thoroughly examined tathāgata-nairātmya-garbha in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, it was found that the doctrines of tathāgatagarbha and pudgala-nairātmya were aligned with each other but only under a certain condition – that is, only when the ātman proposed by other religions was denied. However, from the viewpoint of the metaphysical aspect of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, the tathāgatagarbha can be considered to be the genuine Ātman, but one which is very different from the absolute an-ātman declared in Primitive Buddhism. Actually, there is a noticeable inconsistency between the views of Primitive Buddhism and the tathāgatagarbha tradition as indicated in the following chart.

[111] "於法無我中, 說如來藏是我, 具顯眾德, 即真我義...對如來藏以言無我, 則如來藏爲我矣...然則說以爲我者, 爲開引計我諸外道, 令因妄我達真我". See *Leng Qie (A Ba Duo Luo Bao) Jing Tong Yi* 楞伽(阿跋多羅寶)經通義, in 卍 25, pp.477b~478a, Taipei: Xinwenfeng 新文豐, 1994.

[112] "如來初爲眾生執五蘊我, 說於無我; 後又爲聲聞執無我法, 惑於自性, 爲說真我...如來說無我時, 意在真我". See 楞伽經心印 in 卍 27, p.200a~b, Taipei: Xinwenfeng 新文豐, 1994.

	Agreement	Disagreement
Primitive Buddhism	Heretical Ātman Denied	No Ātman Admitted
Tathāgatagarbha Tradition		Genuine Ātman Admitted

The alignment between tathāgatagarbha and pudgala-nairātmya/an-ātman declared in Primitive Buddhism was conditioned by a denial of ātman of other religions. Furthermore, it is now necessary to note what conditions would be necessary to have tathāgatagarbha and dharma-nairātmya, widely propagated by Mahāyana Buddhism, to be in agreement with each other. To deal with this issue, it is first necessary to clarify the interpretations regarding dharma-nairātmya according to the Madhyamaka and Yogācāra Schools.

In order to refute the claim that all dharmas are existent and possess self-nature held by the Sarvāstivādins, the Mahāyāna tradition, steming from the *Prajñāpāramitāsūtra* to the Madhymaka School established by Nāgārjuna, emphasized the fact that all dharmas are devoid of self-nature (*sarva-dharma-niḥsvabhāva*). That is, all dharms are devoid of an ever-abiding substance (*sarva-dharma-nairātmya*). In other words, all dharmas are ultimately empty (*sarva-dharma-śūnyatā*).

The terms "all dharmas" mentioned here include both the conditioned dharmas and the unconditional dharmas. The term "nairātmya" is actually a synonym of niḥsvabhāva and śūnyatā. Sarva-dharma-nairātmya means that all dharmas (*sarva-dharma*) are ultimately devoid of self-nature (*svabhāva*). Not only the conditioned dharmas of the myriad phenomena are niḥsvabhāva or nairātmya; even the unconditional dharmas such as Bodhi and nirvāṇa are equally niḥsvabhāva and nairātmya. In conclusion, the Madhyamaka

interpretation is that no substantial dharma or intrinsic nature can be found in the ultimate śūnyatā.

Dharma-nairātmya as explained by the Yogācārin Vasubhandu in his work *The Twenty Verses and Their Commentaries (Viṁśatikā),* to which he added his own auto-commentary, reveals a nuanced perspective. In explaining the true essence of dharma-nairātmya, Vasubandhu states:

> However, if all dharmas do not exist, then it would follow that cognition-only (vijñaptimātra) would not exit also; therefore, how would that [non-existence of dharma] be established? By no means does this statement "all dharmas do not exist" mean that one enters into dharma-nairātmya, but rather, [the statement is made,]
>
> ... in regard to an imagined self (*kalpitātmanā*). // 10 c //
>
> It is nairātmya in reference to an imagined self, i.e. all those things imagined by the fools as possessing self-nature by conceptually dichotomizing the apprehended-object from apprehending-subject, etc., but not in reference to the indescribable self (*anabhilāpyātman)*, which belongs to the realm of the Buddha.[113]

From this quotation, we learn that dharma-nairātmya is established only in regard to the imagined self, but not with regard to the real and indescribable self. In other words, dharma-nairātmya within the Yogācāra School negates only the imagined realm that is a representation of the mind-only, and thus refers to the illusionary nature of the parikalpitasvabhāva (imagined nature). However, the real realm of the Buddha, namely the pariniṣpana-svabhāva (perfected nature), does not fall within the definition of dharma-nairātmya as applied to concepts.

[113] The Sanskrit reads: "yadi tarhi sarvathā dharmo nāsti tadapi vijñaptimātraṁ nāstīti kathaṁ tadhi vyavasthāpyate / na khalu sarvathā dharmo nāstīty evaṁ dharma-nairātmya-praveśo bhavati, api tu *kalpitātmanā* //10//. yo bālair dharmaṇāṁ svabhāvo grāhya-grāhakādiḥ parikalpitas tena kalpitenātmanā teṣāṁ nairātmyaṁ, na tv anabhilāpyenātmanā yo buddhānāṁ viṣaya iti". See S. Lévi, op cit., p. 6, lines 14-18. Also see, *Bon kan wa taishō seshin yuishikiron genten* (梵漢和對照世親唯識論原典), edited and translated by Inazu, Norimi (稲津紀三) and Sogabe, Masayuki (曾我部正幸), p. 23. Tokyo: Sanbō Shoten (三宝書店), 1989.

By comparing dharma-nairātmya explained by the Madhyamaka and that explained by the Yogācāra, it is said that, though the exposition of dharma-nairātmya is accepted by these two Schools, their understanding and definition differ. For the Madhyamaka, "dharma" of "dharma-nairātmya" includes all dharmas, both conditioned and unconditioned, while for the Yogācāra school, it simply refers to conditioned and imagined phenomena. Thus for the Yogācāra School, the conditioned dharma is certainly nairātmya, but the unconditioned dharma is not nairātmya; parikalpitasvabhāva is certainly illusionary, but parinișpanasvabhāva is pure and real. The following chart will clarify how dharma-nairātmya is defined by the two schools.

	Dharma-	**Nairātmya**
Madhyamaka	All Dharmas Both Conditioned And Unconditioned	Niḥsvabhāva, Śūnyatā
Yogācāra	Conditioned Dharmas of Parikalpitasvabhāva	Illusionary, Unreal

The tathāgatagarbha doctrine of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, as mentioned above, is regarded as an expedient teaching to reveal dharma-nairātmya. However, what kind of dharma-nairātmya is revealed by the tathāgatagarbha that is dharma-nairātmya? The *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* states:

> What is knowledge of dharma-nairātmya? It is the realization that skandha, dhātu, āyatana is by nature the appearance of parikalpitasvabhāva.[114]

From the above quotation, it is clear that dharma-nairātmya in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* is understood as parikalpitasvabhāva. "Dharma" of "dharma-nairātmya" is restricted to

[114] The Sanskrit version reads: "dharmanairātmyajñānaṁ katamad yaduta skandhadhātvāyatanānāṁ parikalpitalakṣaṇasvabhāvāvabodhaḥ", in *Saddharma-Laṇkāvatāra-sūtram* (Buddhist Sanskrit Series No. 3) p.29. Also Nanjio p. 68, lines 8-9.

conditioned and ever-changing dharma such as skandha, dhātu, and āyatana. Furthermore, these dharmas that are essentially parikalpitasvabhāva, are representations of mind-only. The *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* states:

> To know that there are only organs and [outer] circumstance,
> is to be free from attachment to ātman (*ātma-grāha*).
> To realize that there is mind [only] but no [outer] circumstance,
> is to be free from attachment to dharma (*dharmagrāha*).
> Depending on mūla-vijñāna,
> there is the arising of other vijñāna.[115]

Consequently, dharma-nairātmya expediently revealed through the doctrine of tathāgatagarbha is not the dharma-nairātmya propagated by the Madhyamaka School. Dharma-nairātmya in Yogācāra is meaningful in the context of mind-only. Here we find evidence for Yogācāra influence on the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra.*

In conclusion, the tathāgata-nairātmya-garbha in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* is neither exactly identical to the pudgala-nairātmya or anātman declared in Primitive Buddhism, nor is it a duplicate of dharma-nairātmya propagated by the Madhyamaka School, which insisted that all dharmas, whether conditioned or unconditioned, are ultimately devoid of intrinsic nature. Rather, the "nairātmya" found in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* negates only heretical Ātman and parikalpitasvabhāva. The tathāgata-nairātmya-garbha in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, expressed in a "positive" way can be comprehended as "tathāgata-ātmāstitva-garbha."

Reviewing the viewpoint of dharmanairātmya found in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* as discussed in chapter two of this thesis, it can be pointed out that regarding the relationship

[115] "知但有根境, 則離於我執; 悟心無境界, 則離於法執. 由依本識故, 而有諸識生", in *Da-Sheng-Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing* 大乘入楞伽經,, see T.16, p.631c.

between tathāgatagarbha and Ātman, the *Śrīmālādevisūtra* and the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* present a similar dialectic:

	Thesis: The Tathāgatagarbha Resembles the Heretical Ātman, as stated in Earlier Scriptures	**Antithesis: The Tathāgatagarbha is Emphasized as Nairātmya/An-ātman**	**Synthesis: The "Genuine Ātman" is Raised above Nairātmya/An-ātman**
Śrīmālādevi-sūtra		"Tathāgatagarbha is not ātman, pudgala, sattva, and jīva."	"The dharma-kāya of tathāgata is the perfection of eternity, the perfection of bliss, the perfection of self (ātman), and the perfection of purity."
Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra	"It is expounded in sutras that the tathāgatagarbha is clear and pure by nature, it is eternal, permanent, unceasing, and changeless. It possesses thirty-two characteristics of excellence, hidden within the body of all sentient being ..."	"Tathāgata-nairātmya-garbha should be understood by you, in order to abandon the viewpoints of the heretical philosophers."	"The characteristic of the clear and pure genuine Ātman is exactly tathāgatagarbha."

The above table shows that compared to the *Śrīmālādevisūtra*, the *Laṅkāvatarasūtra* presents a clearer intention to revise the tathāgatagarbha doctrine propagated in previous scriptures. Additionally, it is only in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* that a detailed discussion on nairātmya, together with its relevant interpretation from the Yogācāric perspective, is found, and it is only therein that doctrinal complexities are thus enhanced in contrast to the earlier texts.

Ⅱ. Tathāgatagarbha is Essentially Aśūnya

The claim of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* that

Sometimes it [tathāgatagarbha] is taught as śūnyatā, without-characteristic,

> wishlessness, suchness (*tathatā*), the extent of reality (*bhūtakoṭi*), reality-as-such (*dharmatā*), existential pattern (*dharma-kāya*), nirvāṇa, lacking self-nature (*niḥsvabhāva*), non-arising, non-extinguishing, originally tranquil, nirvāṇa-by-nature. These terms are meant to expound tathāgatagarbha.[116]

seems to be an attempt to justify tathāgatagarbha as none other than śūnyatā, without characteristic, wishlessness, niḥsvabhāva, etc. by contextualizing it in the *Prajñāpāramitāsūtra* that frequently uses those terms. However, the significance of "śūnyatā," an important notion in Buddhism, differs from tradition to tradition and from time to time. Therefore, it will be necessary to clarify whether "śūnyatā" mentioned in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* is identical to "śūnyatā" taught in Primitive Buddhism and Madhyamaka.

Samādhi-traya (three contemplations) or vimokṣa-mukha-traya (three gates to emancipation) is made up of and characterized by "śūnyatā, no-defining-characteristic and wishlessness." The doctrine of samādhi-traya probably has its beginnings in the *Saṁyuktāgama*, according to which śūnyatā, the most fundamental among all the three, is explained as follows:

> Observe well that form/rūpa is an impermanent, uncompromising, and undesirable dharma. In the same manner, observe that feeling (*vedanā*), perception (*saṁjñā*), volitional action (*saṁskāra*), and consciousness (*vijñāna*) are impermanent, uncompromising, and undesirable dharmas. [To observe in this manner] is called "śūnyatā."[117]

The logical steps involved in the discussion of "śūnyatā" in the *Saṁyuktāgama* lies in understanding that the five aggregates are impermanent, and that because they are impermanent they are uncompromising, and that because they are uncompromising they

[116] See footnote 90 above

[117] "善觀色無常磨滅離欲之法，如是觀察受、想、行、識無常磨滅離欲之法...是名爲空." In 雜阿含經 *(Saṁyuktāgama)*, see T.2, p.20b.

lack defining-characteristics, and that because they lack defining-characteristics they are śūnyatā. The teaching of impermanence, uncompromising, and no defining-characteristics apparently are features of Primitive Buddhism. Furthermore, śūnyatā is not simply a denial of self/ātman, but also the denial of what belongs to self/mama.[118]

This early doctrine of śūnyatā is adhered to and expounded by early Mahāyāna traditions that emphasize "śūnyatā of all existences" (*sarva-dharma-śūnyatā*). In the doctrinal context of sarva-dharma-śūnyatā, not only the defiled and conditioned dharma is śūnya, but even the pure and unconditioned dharma is śūnya. All dharmas, whether defiled or pure, are equally śūnya because they are devoid of intrinsic nature (*niḥsvabhāva*). The doctrine of ultimate śūnyatā is thus propagated in early Mahāyāna.

Following in the footsteps of Primitive Buddhism and Early Mahāyāna, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* took up the complex of "śūnyatā, no defining-characteristics, and wishlessness" as an explanation of the tathāgatagarbha. One should question, however, whether śūnyatā mentioned here is the same as that maintained in Primitive Buddhism and Early Mahāyāna. The scholar monk Zeng Fong-yi (曾鳳儀) of the Ming dynasty (1368-1644) annotated this section of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* as follows: "The tathāgatagarbha is by nature pure, thus it is said to be śūnyatā."[119] Accordingly, śūnyatā in the context of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* actually denotes purity, instead of śūnyatā in the sense of an-ātman or niḥsvabhāva. Whether tathāgatagarbha in *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* should be śūnya or aśūnyatā can be considered in the light of the section in which momentariness (*kṣaṇika*) is discussed:

Momentariness, moreover, Mahāmati, is the ālayavijñāna that is named

[118] For example, it is mentioned in the 雜阿含經 *(Saṁyuktāgama)* we find the expression, "the śūnyatā of self and what belongs to self"(空我我所), see T.2, p.72c.

[119] "如來藏自性清淨，故云空", see *Leng Qie Jing Tsung Tong (楞伽經宗通)* in 卍 26, p.458b. Taipei: Xinwenfeng 新文豐, 1994. The same annotation is also given by Tong-run (通潤) in Ming dynasty in his work *Leng Qie Jing He Zhe(楞伽經合轍)*, see 卍 26, p.816a.

> tathāgatagarbha. Momentary is that which is accompanied by manas and the habit-energy of evolving vijñāna. That which is accompanied by habit-energy without outflow is not momentary. And foolish and ordinary people do not comprehend, because they are attached to the theory of momentariness. Because they do not realize momentariness and non-momentariness of all dharmas, the unconditioned (*asaṁskṛta*) dharma is also denied by nihilism (*ucchedadṛṣṭi*).[120]

The Song version of this section is awkward in wording,[121] but its implication seems to basically agree with the Sanskrit version. The Tang version is comparatively smoother in wording,[122] and it seems to accord well with the Sanskrit version. The Tibetan version agrees with the Sanskrit as well, despite an obviously superfluous Tibetan negative particle *ma*.[123] A different translation is found, however, in Wei version, that reads:

> The ālayavijñāna named tathāgatagarbha is neither simultaneous with manas nor with the habit-energy of evolving vijñānas; therefore, it is called, "śūnyatā." Being simultaneous with habit-energy without outflow, it is thus named "aśūnyatā." Mahāmati! foolish and common people, neither realizing nor understanding [this], become attached to all dharmas that are momentary and non-abiding and erroneously say, "Even dharmas without outflow are momentary and non-abiding" and thus, they reject the real tathāgata-garbha.[124]

Apparently, the words "momentariness and non-momentariness" in the other versions transform into "śūnyatā and aśūnyatā" in the Wei version to convey approximately the same

[120] The Sanskrit original reads: "kṣanikaṁ punar mahāmate ālayavijñānaṁ tathāgatagarbhaḥ saṁśabditaṁ manaḥ sahitaṁ pravṛtti-vijñāna-vāsanābhiḥ kṣaṇikam anāsrava-vāsanābhir akṣaṇikam / na ca bāla-pṛthagjanā avabudhyante kṣaṇika-vādābhiniviṣṭāḥ kṣaṇikākṣaṇikatām imāṁ sarvadharmāṇām tad anavabodhād uccheda-dṛṣṭyā asaṁskṛtān api dharmān nāśayiṣyanti". In *Saddharma-Laṇkāvatāra-sūtram (Buddhist Sanskrit Series No.3)*, p.95. See also, Nanjio, p. 235 line 15 – p. 236, line 4.

[121] It reads "名識藏如來藏, 意俱生, 識習氣剎那, 無漏習氣非剎那. 非凡愚所覺, 計著剎那論故, 不覺一切法剎那非剎那, 以斷見壞無爲法," in T.16, p.512a.

[122] It reads: "如來藏名藏識, 所與意等諸習氣俱, 是剎那法; 無漏習氣非剎那法. 此非凡愚剎那論者之所能知, 彼不能知一切諸法有是剎那非剎那故, 彼計無爲同諸法壞, 墮於斷見," in T.16, p.621c.

[123] See the details in *Ḥphags-pa laṅ-kar gśegs-paḥi theg-pa chen-poḥi mdo*, Peking edition of *Tibetan Tripitaka* Vol.29, leaf 163b, line 6-7

[124] "阿梨耶識名如來藏, 無共意、轉識薰習, 故名爲空; 具足無漏薰習法故, 名爲不空. 大慧! 愚癡凡夫不覺不知, 執著諸法剎那不住, 墮在邪見而作是言: '無漏之法亦剎那不住', 破彼真如如來藏". In T.16, p.559c.

notion. The terms "śūnyatā" and "aśūnyatā" in the Wei version were evidently inherited from the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, wherein we find the following:

> Śūnyatā-tathāgatagarbha is free from [mundane] wisdom not [oriented] towards liberation and from all afflictions. Aśūnyatā-tathāgatagarbha is liberation-wisdom possessed by innumerable Buddhas surpassing [the numbers of] grains of the Ganges [and] is the inconceivable Dharma.[125]

By comparing the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* and the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, it can be seen that their explanations on the relation between śūnyatā and tathāgatagarbha are very similar.

	The Superficial Integration between Tathāgatagarbha and Śūnyatā	**The Śūnyatā and Aśūnyatā Defined by the Tathāgatagarbha Tradition**	
		Śūnyatā	**Aśūnyatā**
Śrīmālādevi-sūtra	"Tathāgatagarbha is the wisdom of śūnyatā realized by tathāgatas."	Śūyatātathāgatagarbha is free from [mundane] wisdom not [oriented] towards liberation and from all afflictions.	Aśūnyatātathāgatagarbha is liberation-wisdom possessed by innumerable Buddhas surpassing [the numbers of] grains of the Ganges [and] is the inconceivable Dharma.
Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra	Sometimes it [tathāgata-garbha] is taught as śūnyatā, without-characteristic, wishlessness, suchness (*tathatā*), extent of reality (*bhūtakoṭi*), reality-as-such (dharmatā), existential pattern (*dharma-kāya*), nirvāṇa, lacking self-nature (*niḥsvabhāva*), non-arising, non-extinguishing, originally tranquil, nirvāṇa-by-nature. These terms are meant to expound tathāgatagarbha.	The ālayavijñāna named tathāgatagarbha is neither simultaneous with manas nor with the habit-energy of evolving vijñānas; therefore, it is called "śūnyatā."	"The ālayavijñāna named tathāgatagarbha being simultaneous with habit- energy without outflow, it is thus named "aśūnyatā."

[125] "空如來藏, 所謂離於不解脫智、一切煩惱; 不空如來藏, 具過恆沙河佛解脫智、不思議法". See 勝鬘夫人會, in T.11, p.677a.

Although both the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* and the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* indicate a tendency to connect śūnyatā doctrine passed down from Primitive Buddhism to Early Mahāyāna, this connection is simply a superficial integration based on taking the terms rather literally. As representative works on mind-only, both *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* and *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* suggest śūnyatā in a mind-only sense. That is, these texts claim "conditioned śūnyatā" that can account for something "aśūnya" but does not allow for "ultimate śūnyatā" that negates "intrinsic nature" (*svabhāva*). Therefore, even though the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, just as the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, attempted to integrate śūnyatā with tathāgatagarbha, in the final analysis tathāgatagarbha is regarded to be "aśūnya."

Furthermore, in dealing with this issue the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* and the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* name the subject matter differently. In the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* it is simply referred to as "tathāgatagarbha," while in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* it is called "ālayavijñāna named tathāgatagarbha." Compared to earlier scriptures, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* reveals a sense of Yogācāric influence by identifying the tathāgatagarbha with ālayavijñāna. The identification of tathāgatagarbha with ālayavijñāna is not simply a terminological borrowing from the Yogācāra tradition, but signifies an activator in the doctrinal development of the tathāgatagarbha tradition, which is the issue to be discussed in the next chapter (Chapter Four).

In the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, a perspective on "śūnyatā" can be seen in the following statement:

> It is not the case that vijñāna ceases in its self-real-form, but only its effect-producing-form ceases. If self-real-form ceased, then ālayavijñāna would cease ... however, the cessation of the ālayavijñāna would be no different than the nihilistic

doctrine of the heretical philosophers.[126]

On the basis of this quotation, it is evident that the ālayavijñāna consists of two forms, namely the self-real-form (*svajātilakṣaṇa*) and the effect-producing-form (*karmalakṣaṇa*). Even if the latter is ever-arising and ever-ceasing, the former as a deep-rooted stratum of consciousness can never cease. In other words, the most essential part of the consciousness, the ālayavijñāna, which is tathāgatagarbha, must be ever-existent and aśūnya.

In conclusion, the doctrine of tathāgatagarbha in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* has been expressed in various ways. For example, it has been expressed by the statement, "... Ālayavijñāna named tathāgatagarbha is not simultaneous with manas nor with the habit-energy of evolving vijñānas; therefore, it is called, 'śūnyatā'." Or it is expressed by the statement, "The ālayavijñāna named tathāgatagarbha being simultaneous with habit- energy without outflow, it is thus named 'aśūnyatā'." Or it is expressed by the explanation, "It is not the case that vijñāna ceases in its self-real-form, but only its effect-producing-form ceases." These statements generally follow the stance of the tathāgatagarbha tradition that explain that "some things are śūnya while the other things are aśūnya"[127] and they accord well with *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* that differentiates aśūnyatā-tathāgatagarbha from śūnyatā-tathāgatagarbha. This "aśūnya" standpoint is admitted by the Yogācāra School and the tathāgatagarbha tradition. Therefore, it is natural that the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* took more of a Yogācāric stance than a Madhyamaka one on the issue of śūnyatā and its relation to tathāgatagarbha, and thus, this "śūnyatā" refers to the "conditioned śūnyatā" instead of the "ultimate śūnyatā," the Yogācāric śūnyatā instead of the Madhyamaka śūnyatā.

[126] "非自真相識滅, 但業相滅. 若自真相滅者, 藏識則滅...藏識滅者, 不異外道斷見論議". In the *Leng-Qie-A-Ba-Duo-Luo-Bao-Jing* 楞伽阿跋多羅寶經, see T.16, p.483b. This sentence is to be explained in the next chapter.

[127] "有異法是空, 有異法不空", see *Aṅgulimalyasūtra* 央掘摩羅經 in T.2, p.527b.

4) Conclusion

The tathāgatagarbha tradition seen as a branch of You-zong (有宗), a sect emphasizing existence, is characterized by the teaching of "ātman" and "aśūnyatā." Perhaps certain Mahāyānists in the later period of Mahāyāna Buddhism felt the crisis that this "ātman" is too similar to the heretical Ātman and purposed to lead this doctrinal trend back to the *Āgama* teaching of anātman/nairātmya and to connect it with the early Mahāyāna teaching of śūnyatā. It was probably under this momentum that the claim of "tathāgata-nairātmya-garbha" appeared in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra.* The movement from ātman back to anātman, from aśunyatā back to śūnyatā, is no doubt noticeable. However, after careful reflection upon the tathāgatagarbha doctrine in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, it became evident that this "return" or "integration" had its limitations. In the ideological trend of later Mahāyāna Buddhism, the doctrine of "real and eternal mind-only" became all influential and dominant. Consequently, an investigation on tathāgata-nairātmya-garbha in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* revealed that "nairātmya" was confined to the principle of mind-only; in the same way, "śūnyatā" is clutched under the principle of mind-only. The overwhelming influence of the Yogācāra School that maintained the principle of mind-only is thus presented in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra.* The tathāgata-nairātmya-garbha in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* is ultimately the genuine ātman that is aśūnya. The dialectical development between two is outlined below:

Āgama	**Early Period of the Tathāgatagarbha Tradition**	**The Tathāgatagarbha Teaching in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra***
Nairātmya	*ātman*	*Nairātmya*—in the sense of Mind-Only, namely no heretical Ātman but genuine *Ātman* only
Śūnyatā	*Aśūnyatā*	*Śūnyatā* — in the sense of Mind-Only, namely affliction is śūnya while the real-mind is *aśūnya*

CHAPTER FOUR

TATHĀGATAGARBHA DOCTRINE IN THE *LAṄKĀVATĀRASŪTRA* (2) ——TATHĀGATAGARBHĀLAYAVIJÑĀNA

No doubt a very striking example of an interflow between the Mahāyāna traditions of the tathāgatagarbha doctrine and the doctrines of the Yogācāra School is the newly coined term "tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna" found in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*. Grammatically, the compound "tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna" can be understood as a karma-dhāraya, in which the word "tathāgatagarbha" is considered to be contextually equal to the word "ālayavijñāna." As indicated by many eminent scholars, the combination of "tathāgatagarbha" and "ālayavijñāna" marks a turning point in the development within the tathāgatagarbha tradition. [128] However, what was the doctrinal variation in the tathāgatagarbha tradition that resulted from this combination of "tathāgatagarbha" with "ālayavijñāna"? Or what theoretical developments in the tathāgatagarbha doctrine took place due to its identification with ālayavijñāna? In order to deal with these questions, it will be necessary first to understand in what sense the word "cause" (*hetu*) is used in the discussion on the tathāgatagarbha doctrine.

Throughout the tathāgatagarbha tradition, "tathāgatagarbha" has been viewed as the ultimate cause that supports or upholds all forms of existence. The scriptures, such as the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* and the *Aṅgulimālasūtra*, in the initial stage of the tathāgatagarbha tradition were dedicated towards propagating the teaching that all sentient beings are endowed with "tathāgatagarbha" that is eternal and changeless. In other words, the doctrinal foci of these early scriptures were toward the immeasurable wisdom originally

[128] As introduced in chapter one, the relationship between tathāgatagarbha and ālayavijñāna is an important index in classifying the historical stages of the tathāgatagarbha tradition.

innate in sentient beings and the certainty that all sentient beings would attain Buddhahood eventually. Therefore, the main concern of these early texts was not to establish an ontological existence as "ultimate cause." However, the philosophy of a "first cause" probably had incubated a sense of ontology in these texts that such inclinations fostered a sense of "cause" in the tathāgatagarbha in an indirect way. For example, the idea that "the tathāgatagarbha is originally pure but becomes defiled by adventitious dusts"[129] found in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* tends towards extending the meaning of the word "tathāgatagarbha" as a "supporting cause" *(pratyaya)*; that is, tathāgatagarbha is the cause that supports all the earthly dusts. The implication of tathāgatagarbha as the supporting cause is explained in texts such as the *Śrīmālādevisūtra*, the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatva-nirdeśa-parivarta-sūtra*, and the *Ratna-gotra-vibhāga.* Together with the richness in dialectical interest, these later texts place more and more ontological significance upon the meaning of the tathāgatagarbha. The tathāgatagarbha as the supporting cause of all pure and impure existence is established in this period. Down to texts such as the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* in the later period of the tathāgatagarbha tradition, this doctrine of "supporting cause" has been followed.

What deserves special attention regarding the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* is that, other than the traditional theory of the supporting cause, it demonstrates an unique development in the theory of the ultimate cause. That is, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* briefly and clearly indicates that the tathāgatagarbha is the originating cause of all forms of lives. Despite being the

[129] Statements and metaphors posed to convey this idea are very common in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra.* To cite just one example, "The sentient beings, just as the way I saw, are sinking in the filth of affliction and drifting along the long night. [I] know those afflictions are adventitious dusts, [therefore I] expediently teach the self-nature, which is clear and pure, to make [them] realize the clear and pure tathāgatahood." (如我所見諸有情, 没煩惱穢流長夜, 知彼煩惱爲客塵, 自性清淨方便說, 令證清淨如來果.) See *Da-fang-guang-ru-lai-zang-jing* (大方廣如來藏經) in T.16, p.462c

"ultimate cause," the "supporting cause" and the "originating cause" are very different. For example, with regard to a plant, the earth can be understood as the supporting cause while the seed is the originating cause. Similarly, with regard to clouds and rain, the sky can be understood as the supporting cause and steam or vapor constitutes the originating cause. Therefore, "supporting cause" is a dependable base upon which all phenomena are supported, while "originating cause" is the elementary factor from which all phenomena develop. "Supporting cause" and "originating cause" are both "ultimate cause" of phenomena; however, the former is an indirect cause and the latter is an intimate or direct one.

The tathāgatagarbha is essentially pure and flawless, so how can it serve as the originating cause of all forms of lives which are basically defiled and imperfect? It is exactly in regard to this point that Yogācāric influence is found. That is to say, in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, tathāgatagarbha is generally identical to ālayavijñāna: thus, the later, also named "sarva-bījakaṁ-vijñāna," has the potential to cast the attribute of "originating cause" on the tathāgatagarbha and therefore making it into the seed from which all existences develop.

The ālayavijñāna claimed by the Yogācāra School is "an aggregate of all seeds" (*sarva-bījika*) from which both the physical world of myriad phenomena and sentient beings in endless transmigration mature and arise. Therefore, the ālayavijñāna is the ultimate cause of all existences. Tathāgatagarbha nourished by the tathāgatagarbha tradition is the pure and ever-abiding base that supports and upholds all phenomena. Therefore, the tathāgatagarbha is the ultimate base of all existences. Comparatively speaking, both ālayavijñāna and tathāgatagarbha share the same features as the ultimate cause behind the

visible phenomena; however, the attribute and function of these two kinds of "ultimate cause" are quite different. The ālayavijñāna is capable of generating all things and is thus dynamic; the tathāgatagarbha is a supporting for all things and thus should be static.

	Name	Classification	Attribute	Function
Ultimate Cause	Ālayavijñāna	Producing Cause	Dynamic (Ever-changing and Evolving)	Generating All Existences
	Tathāgatagarbha	Supporting Cause	Static (Ever-abiding and Changeless)	Supporting All Existences

By combining ālayavijñāna and tathāgatagarbha, the attribute and function of the former was probably added to the latter and thus extended the meaning of tathāgatagarbha. In order to highlight this external influence from the Yogācāra School upon the tathāgatagarbha theory in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, this chapter will examine tathāgatagarbha as the "ultimate cause" found prior to the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra.*

1) Meaning of Tathāgatagarbha as Cause prior to the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*

The early scriptures of the tathāgatagarbha tradition, such as the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, though containing within them the inclination to understand tathāgatagarha as ultimate cause, had not yet discussed the ontological significance of it directly. Therefore, in order to trace the meaning of tathāgatagarbha as ultimate cause, we should focus our attention on later texts such as the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatva-nirdeśa-parivarta-sūtra*, and the *Ratna-gotra-vibhāga.*

Ⅰ. The *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*

Tathāgatagarbha thought found in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* owes its doctrinal basis mainly to the *Śrīmālādevisūtra*. As discussed in chapter two, the *Śrīmālādevisūtra*, being a representative scripture in the middle stage of the tathāgatagarbha tradition, went beyond the basic tenet that all sentient beings are endowed with tathāgatagarbha and developed a variety of theories that gave tathāgatagarbha a more comprehensive significance. The śūnyatā and aśūnyatā of tathāgatagarbha, the relationship between dharma-kāya and tathāgatagarbha, as well as tathāgatagarbha as supporting cause of pure and defiled existences, have all been expounded in the *Śrīmālādevisūtra*:

> The tathāgatagarbha is the basis, the upholder, and the support of the wisdom not separate from liberation. Also it is the basis, the upholder, and the support of the conditioned dharmas that are separate from and other than liberation.[130]

Here, tathāgatagarbha is depicted as "ultimate cause" supporting pure existences of the Buddha Dharma and also defiled existences of the conditioned dharma.

By defining the "tathāgatagarbha" as "ultimate cause supporting all existences," the *Śrīmālādevisūtra* explicitly declares that "tathāgatagarbha is the support (*niśraya* / *pratisaraṇa*), upholder (*ādhāra*), and base (*pratiṣṭhā*)."[131] As implied by this declaration, tathāgatagarbha is the supporting base that upholds all existences just as the sky is the basis of all phenomena. Depending on and supported by the sky, all beings, be they insentient

[130] "如來藏者, 與不離解脫智藏, 是依是持是爲建立; 亦與外離不解脫智諸有爲法, 依、持、建立". See T.11, 勝鬘夫人會 p.676c. The version of Guṇabhadra is not clear in wording here. The approximate meaning is that "what provides the dependence, the hold and the support to the inconceivable Buddha Dharma, and to the conditioned dharmas, is the tathāgatagarbha". (不離不斷不脫不異不思議佛法...斷脫異外有爲法依、持、建立者, 是如來藏) See 勝鬘師子吼一乘大方便方廣經, T.12, p,222b. In either case of the two Chinese versions, tathāgatagarbha is indicated as the final basis of both the pure and the defiled dharmas.

[131] See *The Lion's Roar of Queen Śrīmālā*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1990 1st edition, p.105. The Chinese version reads "如來藏是依、是持、是建立". See 勝鬘師子吼一乘大方便方廣經, T.12, p.222b.

mountains and rivers or sentient humans and animals, are able to exist and act.

However, how is that the tathāgatagarbha is capable of being the ultimate basis of all beings? It is because tathāgatagarbha possesses the attributes of "ever-abiding" and of "being free of conditioned characteristics." The *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* states:

> Life and death depend on the tathāgatagarbha ... tathāgatagarbha exists; therefore, [saṁsāric existence of] life and death are explained ... this is a sound doctrine....Death is the decay of all organs; life is the new arising of all organs. Tathāgatagarbha has neither life nor death; tathāgatagarbha is free of conditioned characteristics; tathāgatagarbha is ever-abiding and unchanging; therefore, tathāgatagarbha is the basis, upholder, and support.[132]

The cycle of life and death is imperfect and transient. Since the conditioned phenomena of life and death are ever-changing, they required something relatively stable and steady to be their basis. Generally speaking, whatever functions as a basis for others must possess the attribute of constancy, just as the moon that waxes and wanes depends on the constancy of the sky. Sentient beings, in the same manner, undergo life and death on the basis of an ever-abiding tathāgatagarbha. It is due to its property of permanence that tathāgatagarbha is able to function as "ultimate cause" that supports the changing world of mortals.

The permanent property of tathāgatagarbha provides changing phenomena not only the basis of an ultimate support, but also the basis of practice upon which the struggle towards nirvāṇa becomes possible. The *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* reads:

> If tathāgatagarbha did not exist, then there would be neither the detesting of suffering nor the joy of seeking enlightenment. Why? The six consciousnesses together with what are to be known – these seven dharmas are impermanent and non-abiding even for an instant, cannot bear sufferings, and cannot detest and

[132] "生死者依如來藏ii有如來藏, 故說生死, 是名善說...死者, 謂諸受根壞; 生者, 新諸根起, 非如來藏有生有死. 如來藏者離有爲相, 如來藏常住不變, 是故如來藏是依, 是持, 是建立." See 勝鬘師子吼一乘大方便方廣經, T.12 p.222b.

> reject [suffering] and seek enlightenment. The tathāgatagarbha is without beginning; it is a dharma that neither originates nor extinguishes; it experiences the feeling of sufferings; it is capable of detesting sufferings and of seeking enlightenment.[133]

The six consciousnesses and what is to be known by the consciousnesses are always changing, and thus they cannot serve as a solid basis. It is obvious that the feelings of suffering cannot be kept and stored in this fluctuating consciousness that is swiftly changing. Furthermore, because the six consciousnesses are changing and unable to bear the feeling of sufferings, it is impossible for them to arouse the motivation for practice and the power to continue that are enduring and reliable. In contrast, tathāgatagarbha that is rooted in the depths of consciousness is unconditioned and is thus free from the oscillation of arising and extinguishing. It is owing to this characteristic of constancy that the feelings of suffering can be rooted and kept in tathāgatagarbha, and thus the tathāgatagarbha provides sentient beings with the continuous motivation of struggling through the fetters of sufferings and with the wish to consistently embrace the deep-rooted expectation of attaining Buddhahood. Thus, the tathāgatagarbha, owing to its attribute of ever-abiding, is not only a "supporting cause" of every pure and defiled existences, but also the "ultimate basis" of the deep-seated motivation of turning the defiled saṁāra into the pure nirvāṇa.

Ⅱ. The *Anūnatvāpūrṇatva-nirdeśa-parivarta-sūtra*

At approximately the same time as the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatva-nirdeśa-parivarta-sūtra* reveals a tathāgatagarbha doctrine very much the same as the

[133] "若無如來藏者, 應無厭苦、樂求涅槃. 何以故? 於此六識及以所知, 如是七法, 刹那不住, 不受眾苦, 不堪厭離, 願求涅槃. 如來藏者, 無有前際, 無生無滅法, 受諸苦, 彼爲厭苦, 願求涅槃." See 勝鬘夫人會 T.11, p.677c. In this citation the term "所知" is quite vague in meaning. Its counterpart in the version of Guṇabhadra is "心法智", which is probably the manas or the seventh consciousness suggested by the Yogācāra School. In this case, this 心法智 is the consciousness upon which the six consciousnesses are based.

former. This sutra expounds three kinds of dharmas in the realm of sentient beings[134]:

1) The dharma originally corresponding to the tathāgatagarbha substance and is pure (如來藏本際相應體及清淨法): This is the dharma substance originally existent. It is not separated from the pure wisdom and the dharma-dhātu of tathatā. It corresponds to the pure dharma only. To the sentient beings it is the mind clear and pure by nature. This pure dharma is very similar to aśūnya-tathāgatagarbha expounded in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra.*

2) The dharma originally not corresponding to tathāgatagarbha substance and being tangled in afflictions is impure (如來藏本際不相應體及煩惱纏不清淨法): This is the defiled dharma entangled in afflictions from beginningless time. It does not correspond to the pure dharma-dhātu. It is removed only by the wisdom of the Buddha. To the sentient beings it is the adventitious dust of afflictions. This defiled dharma is in harmony with the śūnya-tathāgatagarbha expounded in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra.*

3) The dharma equal to, eternal, and existent in the tathāgatagarbha even into the future (如來藏未來際平等、恆及有法): The tathāgatagarbha is the foundation of all dharmas. Although existing in mundane phenomena, it is none other than all true dharmas. The tathāgatagarbha supports all dharmas and is the upholder of all dharmas because it is non-originating and non-extinguishing, eternal, clear and cool, changeless, and a refuge. This attribute of the tathāgatagarbha agrees with what has been explained in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* by the statement, "Tathāgatagarbha is the basis, the upholder and the support."

[134] The Chinese depictions are 如來藏本際相應體及清淨法, 如來藏本際不相應體及煩惱纏不清淨法, and the 如來藏未來際平等、恆及有法. See the details in T.16, p.467b~c.

It is in the third point that the tathāgatagarbha as the ultimate cause supporting all existences is affirmed. Just as the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatva-nirdeśa-parivarta-sūtra* also indicates that tathāgatagarbha is dharma-kāya, which is the unconditioned dharma that neither originates nor extinguishes. Moreover, this dharma-kāya of tathāgata is eternal, permanent, clear and cool, and changeless. It is due to these attributes of steadiness and so on that the tathāgatagarbha is able to support all dharmas, uphold all dharmas, and function as the ultimate cause of all existences.

Ⅲ. The *Ratna-gotra-vibhāga*

Following in the footsteps of the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* and the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatva-nirdeśa-parivarta-sūtra*, the *Ratna-gotra-vibhāga* in collating the tathāgatagarbha texts and summarizing the tathāgatagarbha teaching finally becomes the representative work of the tathāgatagarbha tradition. It is indicated in the *Ratna-gotra-vibhāga* that the flawless dhātu, namely the mind that is clear and pure by nature, is the ultimate basis of the flawed dhātus such as the five aggregates, the six sensory organs, and so on. The *Ratna-gotra-vibhāga* states:

> Just as all world-systems arise and disintegrate depending upon open space,
> the senses arise and disintegrate depending upon the dhātu without outflow....
> Earth depends upon water and water upon wind.
> Wind depends on space [but] space does not depend upon earth and so on.
> In the same way, aggregates, elements, and sensory organs are based upon karma and defilements.
> Karma and defilements are based upon unwholesome thoughts, [but] unwholesome thoughts abide in the pure mind.
> Yet the pure mind itself does not abide in all those phenomena.[135]

[135] This translation is based on the Chinese version (see T.31, p.814a 如一切世間, 依虛空生滅, 依於無漏界,

The quotation above implies that what is relatively stable, such as karma, defilements, and unwholesome thoughts, provide a relatively stable support, while what is absolutely stable, ie., the ultimately pure mind, provides an absolutely stable support upon which all phenomena are sustained. It is further explained:

> The pure mind, just as open space, is without causes and conditions,
> Nor does it need a principle of unity [of cause and conditions].
> It neither arises, abides, nor ceases.
> Just like open space, pure mind is always luminous and changeless, [but]
> It becomes covered by the adventitious afflictions produced from imaginary discrimination.[136]

It is evident from the above quotations that the ultimately pure mind is absolutely stable owing to its unconditioned nature, by virtue of which it is free from the restriction of arising, abiding, cessation, and so on. It is this changeless attribute of "pure mind" that makes it possible for it to function as the final support of all.

On the other hand, this intrinsically pure mind, namely the tathāgatagarbha, is not only the supporting cause of all phenomena, but it is also the fundamental cause whence the motivation of emancipation comes forth. In explaining the relevant teaching of the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, the *Ratna-gotra-vibhāga* states in a verse:

有諸根生滅 ... 地依於水住, 水復依於風, 風依於虛空, 空不依地等. 如是陰界根, 住煩惱業中, 諸煩惱業等, 依不善思惟, 不善思惟行, 住清淨心中, 自性清淨心, 不住彼諸法) in consultation with Tang, Xi-yong's new translation from the Sanskrit version (see *The New Translation of the Ratna-gotra-vibhāga from the Sanskrit Version*, pp. 85~86, Taipei: Comprehensive Buddha Culture, 2006) and the English translation by Rosemarie Fuchs (see *The Buddha Nature*, pp. 26~27, New York: Snow Lion, 2000) The translation of "the dhātu without outflow (無漏界/ anāsrava-dhātu)" is based on the Chinese version as cited above. However, according to Tang, Xi-yong, "the dhātu without outflow", according to the Sanskrit version (asaṁskṛta-dhātu) and the Tibetan version ('dus ma byas dbyings), should be "the unconditioned dhātu/ 無爲界." See *The New Translation of the Ratna-gotra-vibhāga from the Sanskrit Version*, pp.85

[136] This translation is based on the Chinese version (see T.31, p.814b 淨心如虛空, 無因復無緣, 及無和合義, 亦無生住滅. 如虛空淨心, 常明無轉變,爲虛妄分別, 客塵煩惱染) in consultation with Tang, Xi-yong's new translation from the Sanskrit version (see *The New Translation of the Ratna-gotra-vibhāga from the Sanskrit Version*, p.86, Taipei: Comprehensive Buddha Culture, 2006) and the English translation by Rosemarie Fuchs (see *The Buddha Nature*, p.27, New York: Snow Lion, 2000)

> If the buddha element (*buddha-dhātu*) were not present, there would be no remorse over suffering. There would be no longing for nirvāṇa, nor striving and devotion towards this aim ... that suffering is seen as the fault of existence and happiness as the quality of nirvāṇa, stems from the presence of the disposition (*gotra*) to buddhahood. "Why so?" In those who are devoid of disposition, such seeing does not occur.[137]

Obviously, the terms "Buddha element (*buddha-dhātu*)" and "disposition (*gotra*)" in the quotation above are synonyms for the word "tathāgatagarbha." What is evident here is that while worldly sufferings depend upon the tathāgatagarbha to arise, the will to remove suffering and to seek nirvāṇa also depends upon the tathāgatagarbha to be aroused. It can be said that the *Ratna-gotra-vibhāga* faithfully interprets the tathāgatagarbha doctrine that the tathāgatagarbha is the supporting cause of the saṁsāric world as well as the guarantee of the Buddhahood found in the *Śrīmālādevisūtra*. Actually, this doctrine is consistently claimed throughout the tathāgatagarbha tradition.

2) Tathāgatagarbha as Cause in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*

The tathāgatagarbha doctrine in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* on the one hand inherits the earlier tradition with regard to tathāgatagarbha as the "supporting cause" upon which all dharmas, whether pure or defiled, are established. On the other hand, the tathāgatagarbha doctrine due to Yogācāric influence is identified with the "producing cause" of seed (*bīja*) from which all existences originate.

It should be noted that since the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* is greatly influence by the Yogācāra School, the term "tathāgatagarbha" becomes identical with the term "ālayavijñāna." In the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* the statements, "Tathāgatagarbha that is named

[137] This is the translation by Rosemarie Fuchs (see *The Buddha Nature*, p.25, New York: Snow Lion, 2000)

ālayavijñāna"[138] and "ālayavijñāna that is named tathāgatagarbha"[139] are found, and thus tathāgatagarbha and ālayavijñāna becomes synonyms. Consequently, we find that the two terms have been combined to produce the compound "tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna." The following discussion, which incorporates the ideas of "supporting cause" and "producing cause" in the context of the term "ālayavijñāna" appearing as a synonym of the word "tathāgatagarbha" and vice-versa, has been divided into two major topics:

I. Meaning of "Supporting Cause" inherited from the Tathāgatagarbha tradition, and

II. Meaning of "Producing Cause" implanted from the Yogācāra School.

I. Meaning of "Supporting Cause" Inherited from the Tathāgatagarbha Tradition

The argument that the tathāgatagarbha is the ultimate cause supporting all existences is based on the philosophical assumption that all temporal and mortal things must depend on something eternal and substantial. Temporal and mortal things no doubt are extinguishable while their eternal and substantial basis must be steady and imperishable. The argument for the cessation of all existences is none other than nihilism that has been refuted by Buddhism. Regarding this, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* states:

[138] Skt. text reads: tathāgatagarbha ālayavijñānasaṁśabdito, see Nanjio, p. 235, line 7-8. The Song version reads "如來藏名識藏" (*Len-Qie-A-Ba-Duo-Luo—Bao-Jing* 楞伽阿跋多羅寶經, T.16, p.512b). The term "識藏" in view of word order of the compound, "ālaya-vijñāna" is probably a scribe's mis-ordering of "藏識". The Wei version reads "阿梨耶識" (*Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing* 入楞伽經, T.16, p.559b), which designates only "ālayavijñāna." This discrepancy may have resulted from the Sanskrit original, or may be a brief rendering adopted by the translator. The Tang version reads "如來藏名藏識" (*Da-Sheng-Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing* 大乘入楞伽經, T.16, p.621c), which is a relatively correct rendering among the three Chinese versions.

[139] Skt. text reads: ālayavijñānaṁ tathāgatagarbhaḥ saṁśabditaṁ, see Nanjio, p. 235 line 16. The Song version reads "名識藏如來藏" (T.16, p.512b), which is ambiguous, not to mention that the word order of "識藏" could be wrong. The Wei version reads "阿梨耶識名如來藏" This is a relatively clearer rendering. The Tang version reads "如來藏名藏識" (T.16, p.621c), which is totally the same as the previous one. Theoretically it should be rendered "藏識名如來藏".

> Three modes are distinguishable in the Vijñānas: (1) Vijñāna characterized as evolving, (2) Vijñāna characterized as producing effects, and (3) Vijñāna characterized as remaining in its original nature....

Having given the three kinds of vijñānas, the sūtra continues to discuss what the cessation of each means and turns to discuss the condition and the consequence of the ālayavijñāna ceasing:

> ... if they were not different, the cessation of the evolving Vijñānas would mean the cessation of Ālayavijñāna, but there would be no cessation of its original form. Therefore, Mahātmati, what ceases to function is not the Ālaya in its original self-form, but the effect-producing form of the vijñānas. When this original self-form ceases to exist, there will indeed be the cessation of the Ālayavijñāna. If, however, there is the cessation of the Ālayavijñāna, this doctrine will in no way differ from the nihilistic doctrine of the philosophers.[140]

Consciousnesses are classified into three – the evolving form (*pravṛttilakṣaṇa*), effect-producing form (*karmalakṣaṇa*), and original self-form (*svajātilakṣaṇa*).[141] Among these the evolving form refers to the former seven consciousnesses characterized by developing and becoming. The effect-producing form refers to the arising and decaying function of

[140] This is the translation of Suzuki, see *The Lankavatara Sutra—A Mahayana Text*, pp.33 and 34-35, Taipei: SMC Publishing Inc. 1991. The *Leng-Qie-A-Ba-Duo-Luo-Bao-Jing* 楞伽阿跋多羅寶經, reads: "諸識有三種相, 謂轉相、業相、真相...非自真相識滅, 但業相滅. 若自真相滅者, 藏識則滅...藏識滅者, 不異外道斷見論議". See T.16, p.483b.

[141] The translated term of the Song version is "自真相" (T.16, p.483b), the Tang version "真相" (T.16, pp.593b、c) and the Wei version "智相" and "自相" (T.16, p.522a). The rendering of the Wei version is not coherent; besides, the context wherein these terms belong seems not accurate. The Sanskrit "jāti" means birth or origin; this is why Suzuki translates it as the "original self-form". The Tibetan version translates "jāti" as "rigs" (vol. 29, p.32, leaf 76b, line 1) and therefore adds the sense of Buddha lineage or Buddha nature other than birth or origin. In this case, it is questionable why the Song and Tang versions translate svajātilakṣaṇa as "true form" (真相) and "true self-form" (自真相) respectively, instead of "original form" (生相) and "original self-form" (自生相) that accords well with the Sanskrit original? To this questionable point an explanation is suggested by Takasaki, Jikido that, the term "birth/ jāti/生" extends the meaning of "features destined by birth." Moreover, the "features destined by birth" extends the meaning of "the original, inherent feature," which is the "true form/真相." See the details in *The Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra (楞伽経)*, p.136, in Bukkyo Koza (佛教講座) 17 Daizo Shuppan Kabushiki Kaisha(大藏出版株式会社) Tokyo, 1980, 2nd edition, 1985.

consciousnesses. The original self-form refers to the originally clear and pure state of tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna.

The evolving form and the effect-producing form of Vijñānas are both superficial phenomena unceasingly arising and falling, while the original self-form is the deep-seated, ever-abiding substratum. The effect-producing form restlessly turns around and around, but the substratum of the original self-form, namely the tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna, is constantly abiding; therefore, to view tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna as ceasing is no different than the nihilistic theory suggested by heretic philosophers.

The assumption that the temporary things must depend on something substantial is also suggested in the following verse:

> The ocean of ālayavijñāna is ever-abiding.
> Due to the agitation of the wind of the external world,
> The waves of various consciousnesses
> Arise turbulently.[142]

Just as the ever-abiding ocean is the basis supporting the waves, the ever-abiding ālayavijñāna is the basis supporting the seven consciousnesses. Even though the surging waves may cease while the deep ocean itself is unceasingly existent, in the same manner, the surface consciousnesses may vanish even though the substratum consciousness exists continuously.

According to the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, the continuously existing substance is none other than tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna. In other words, tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna is the supporting cause of all existences. Moreover, the terms "all existences" mentioned here include defiled dharmas of transmigration as well as pure dharmas of emancipation. This

[142] "藏識海常住，境界風所動，種種諸識浪，騰躍而轉生", see *Leng-Qie-A-Ba-Duo-Luo-Bao-Jing* in T.16, p.484b.

means tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna is the supporting cause for both saṁsāra and nirvāṇa. Regarding this doctrine, we turn to a close examination of this argument cited in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*:

1. Moreover, oh Mahāmati, Wholesome and unwholesome are [terms referring to] the eight vijñānas. Which are the eight? They are the tathāgatagarbha named ālayavijñāna, Manas, Manovijñāna, and the aggregate of five vijñānas as described by the outsiders. Mahāmati! The aggregate of five vijñānas does not transmigrate, is not inclined to suffer or to be happy, and does not have the function of becoming the cause for nirvāṇa. Moreover, Mahāmati! The tathāgatagarbha is associated with the cause inclined towards suffering and happiness.[143]

2. The [terms] wholesome and unwholesome refer to the eight vijñānas. Which are the eight? They are tathāgatagarbha named ālayavijñāna, Manas, Manovijñāna, and the aggregate of the five vijñānas ... seven vijñānas do not transmigrate, do not bear suffering and happiness, and are not the cause of nirvāṇa. Mahāmati! The tathāgatagarbha endures suffering and happiness and possesses the cause [for liberation].[144]

3. The so-called wholesome and unwholesome dharmas are [terms in reference to] the eight vijñānas. Which are the eight? The first is the ālayavijñāna, the second is the manas, the third is the manovijñāna, the fourth is visual vijñāna, the fifth is auditory vijñāna, the sixth is the olfactory vijñāna, the seventh is gustatory vijñāna, and the eighth is the tactile/body vijñāna ... The aggregate of five vijñānas does not occur in the six ways [of existences] of transmigration, does not bear suffering and happiness, and does not function as the cause for nirvāṇa

[143] See *Saddharma-Laṅkāvatāra-sūtram*, (Buddhist Sanskrit Series No. 3) p. 95. See also Nanjio, p.235, line 6) kuśalākuśalāḥ punar mahāmate yaduta aṣṭau vijñānāni. katamāni aṣṭau? Yaduta tathāgatagarbha ālayavijñānasaṁśabdito mano manovijñānaṁ ca pañca ca vijñānakāyastīrthyānuvarṇitāḥ / ... (p. 236, line 4) asaṁsāriṇo mahāmate pañca vijñānakāyā ananubhūtasukhaduḥkhā anirvāṇahetavaḥ / tathāgatagarbhaḥ punar mahāmate anubhūtasukhaduḥkhahetusahitaḥ ... / (Sanskrit version)

[144] 善不善者, 謂八識. 何等爲八? 謂如來藏名識藏（心）、意、意識及五識身... 七識不流轉, 不受苦樂, 非涅槃因. 大慧! 如來藏者, 受苦樂, 與因俱. (Song version) in *Leng-Qie-A-Ba-Duo-Luo-Bao-Jing* 楞伽阿跋多羅寶經, see T.16, p.512a.

Mahāmati! The tathāgatagarbha does (not) bear suffering and happiness and is (not) the cause of life and death.[145]

4. The wholesome and the unwholesome refer to the so-called eight vijñānas. Which are the eight? They are the tathāgatagarbha named ālayavijñāna, manas, manovijñāna, and the aggregate of five vijñānas ... Mahāmati! The aggregate of the five vijñānas does not transmigrate and does not bear suffering and happiness. The tathāgatagarbha bears suffering and happiness and possesses the cause [for liberation].[146]

5. The wholesome and the unwholesome are said to be the eight vijñānas. Which are the eight? They are the eighth tathāgatagarbha named ālayavijñāna, manas, manovijñāna, and the aggregate of five vijñānas spoken about by heretical philosophers ... Mahāmati! The aggregate of five vijñānas neither transmigrates, nor bears suffering and happiness, nor is the cause of nirvāṇa. Mahāmati! Tathāgatagarbha possesses the cause for not experiencing suffering and happiness.[147]

There are some discrepancies among the various versions. First, according to the Song version, the former seven vijñānas cannot be the subject of transmigration, cannot bear the feeling of suffering and happiness, and cannot be the cause of emancipation. However, according to the Sanskrit version, the Tibetan version, and two other Chinese versions, it is the "aggregate of the five vijñānas" that cannot undergo these. Even so, it is not necessarily

[145] 言善不善法者, 所謂八識. 何等爲八? 一者阿梨耶識, 二者意, 三者意識, 四者眼識, 五者耳識, 六者鼻識, 七者舌識, 八者身識π五識身者, 不生六道, 不受苦樂, 不作涅槃因. 大慧! 如來藏（不）受苦樂,（非）生死因.（Wei version）in *Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing* 入楞伽經, see T.16, p.559b~c.

[146] 善不善者, 所謂八識. 何等爲八? 謂如來藏名藏識, 意及意識, 并五識身π大慧! 五識身非流轉, 不受苦樂, 非涅槃因. 如來藏受苦樂, 與因俱.（Tang version）in *Da-Sheng-Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing* 大乘入楞伽經, see T.16, p.621c.

[147] dge ba dang mi dge ba ni 'di lta ste rnam par shes pa brgyad rnams so. brgyad gang zhe na, 'di lta ste de bzhin gshegs ba'i snying po kun gzhi rnam par shes pa zhes brgyad pa dang, yid dang, yid kyi rnam par shes par dang, mu stegs can gyis brjod pa'i rnam par shes pa 'dus pa lnga rnams so...blo gros chen po! rnam par shes pa 'dus pa lnga rnams ni 'khor ba yang ma yin, bde ba dang sdug bsngal myong ba yang ma yin, mya ngan las 'da' ba'i rgyu yang ma yin no. blo gros chen po! de bzhin gshegs pa'i snying po ni dge ba dang sdug bsngal mi myong ba'i rgyu dang bcas pa. (Tibetan version). *Ḥphags-pa laṅ-kar gśegs-paḥi theg-pa chen-poḥi mdo*, Peking edition of *Tibetan Tripitaka* Vol.29, p.67, leaf 163b, line 2 – leaf 164a, line 1.

the case that the Song version cannot convey the doctrinal stance of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, because this paragraph of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* probably owes its inspiration to the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* wherein it is claimed: "The six consciousnesses together with what are to be known – these seven dharmas are impermanent and non-abiding even for an instant, cannot bear sufferings, cannot detest and reject [suffering], and seek enlightenment."[148] The "seven vijñānas" suggested in the Song version echo these "seven dharmas" seen in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*. Moreover, in the Song version of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* it is stated that "the aggregate of the five vijñānas is together with manas and manovijñāna, wherein the characteristics of the wholesome and the unwholesome forms transform and change continuously [like] flowing water." [149] Although the eighth vijñāna, the tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna is substantially steady and constant, the former seven vijñānas are always changing even in a single instant.

To conclude this first discrepancy, whether one takes one's stand on the "seven vijñānas" suggested in the Song version or on the "aggregate of the five vijñānas" suggested in the other versions, they cannot function as a steady and constant basis supporting the momentarily turning cycle of life and death, because they transform and are unsteady. Further, due to their mutability and instability, those surface-layered vijñānas cannot bear the feeling of suffering and happiness and therefore cannot arouse an aspiration for emancipation in the depths of one's mind.

Second, the Sanskrit, Song, and Tang versions all indicate that "the tathāgatagarbha endures suffering and happiness and possesses the cause [for liberation]," while the Wei

[148] See T.11, p.677c, as already introduced in this chapter. See p. 86, nt. 131 above.
[149] "五識身者, (心、)意、意識俱, 善不善相展轉變壞, 相續流注", in *Da-Sheng-Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing* 大乘入楞伽經, See T.16, p.512c. Nevertheless, the corresponding section of the Wei version, Tang version, Sanskrit version and the Tibetan version all mention that the aggregate of the five vijñānas is together with the "manovijñānas" only, but do not mention the seventh vijñāna of "manas".

version reads that the tathāgatagarbha "... does (not) bear suffering and happiness and is (not) the cause of life and death," and the Tibetan version reads that the tathāgatagarbha "... possesses the cause for not experiencing suffering and happiness" respectively.

With regard to such discrepancies, referring to the statement "Tathāgatagarbha is that which has no beginning; it is a dharma that neither originates nor extinguishes; it sows all sufferings, detests [worldly] suffering and happiness, and seeks enlightenment"[150] found in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* may be of some help. This statement, which is probably the doctrinal basis for the origin of the counterpart statement found in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, obviously agrees with the Sanskrit, Song, and Tang versions. Moreover, because according to the context of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* it seems that it intends to contrast the tathāgatagarbha with the five/seven vijñānas, the negations found in the Wei and Tibetan versions are superfluous words inserted possibly due to a mistake in printing or copying. Therefore, what the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* intends to explain here, in the manner of the doctrinal foundation already laid in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, is that the tathāgatagarbha, compared to the former five/seven vijñānas, possesses the attributes of permanence and ever-abiding, of bearing sufferings, of detesting and rejecting [suffering], and of seeking enlightenment. To support this, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* states:

> The seven of manas and manovijñāna, visual-vijñāna, and so on have habit-energy (*vāsanā*) as their cause, They are momentary and lack wholesome virtues. They are not subjected to transmigration ... the tathāgatagarbha is subjected to transmigration of life and death and is the cause for [both] nirvāṇa and worldly suffering and happiness.[151]

[150] "如來藏者, 無前際, 不起不滅法, 種諸苦, 得厭苦樂、求涅槃." See 勝鬘師子吼一乘大方便方廣經, T.12, p.222b.

[151] "意及意識、眼識等七, 習氣爲因, 是刹那性, 離無漏善, 非流轉法...如來藏者, 生死流轉, 及是涅槃、苦樂之因," see T.16, p.622c.

As is clear from the citation above, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* views "tathāgatagarbha named ālayavijñāna" as the supporting cause of all existences. Compared to the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, which suggests that the supporting cause of all beings is "tathāgatagarbha," the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* reveals a clear intention to assimilate the Yogācāra teaching of ālayavijñāna.

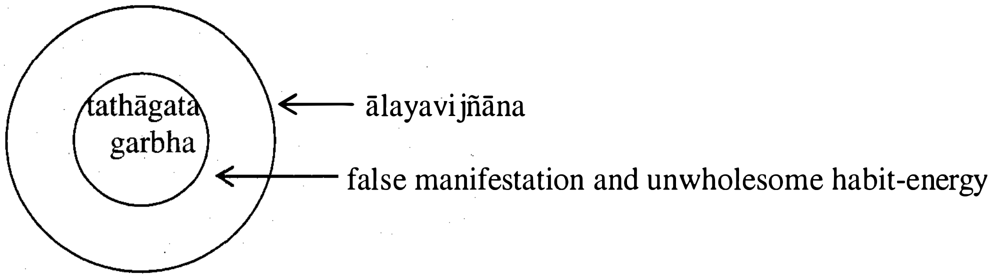
There have been two systems of philosophy with regard to the ultimate supporting cause. First, the *Śrīmālādevisūtra* considers the tathāgatagarbha as the ultimate supporting cause, and the *Mahāyāna-saṁgraha-śāstra* considers the ālayavijñāna to be the ultimate supporting cause. To regard the tathāgatagarbha as the ultimate supporting cause is to presume that all existences are based on the ultimately pure and abiding substance; while to regard the ālayavijñāna as the ultimately supporting cause is to presume that all existences are based on impure seeds that are are changing and uncertain. It seems that the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* integrates the two philosophies of the tathāgatagarbha tradition and the Yogācāra School by combining tathāgatagarbha with ālayavijñāna, and therefore suggesting "tathāgatagarbha named ālayavijñāna" as the supporting cause of all existences. In this case, the supporting cause of all is both the pure and abiding tathāgatagarbha as well as the impure and variable ālayavijñāna." Essentially, such a supporting cause unites the pure and the impure and combines the abiding with the changeable. However, such a claim as "tathāgatagarbha named ālayavijñāna" comes down on the side of the pure tathāgatagarbha, for it essentially inherits the tathāgatagarbha tradition of "the intrinsically pure, yet defiled by adventitious dusts," a claim made by the tathāgatagarbha tradition in its statement "The tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna is pure by nature, [but] it is defiled by adventitious dusts."[152]

[152] "如來藏藏識本性清淨, 客塵所染而爲不淨", see *Da-Sheng-Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing* 大乘入楞伽經,, in T.16, p.619b.

The *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* describes the above as follows:

> Tathāgatagarbha ... ie., what is named ālayavijñāna, having been influenced by habit-energy of various dull obscure reasoning from beginningless time, is accompanied by the seven vijñānas that give rise to abode of ignorance just as the great ocean on which waves roll constantly [even though] its body subsists uninterruptedly. [But it] is free from the harm of impermanence, detests those who speak about ātman, [and] is completely pure in its essence. [153]

Accordingly, it is because of dull habit energy that the intrinsically pure tathāgatagarbha becomes the dust-covered ālayavijñāna. Even though ālayavijñāna appears as if different from tathāgatagarbha both in names and condition, essentially the nucleus of ālayavijñāna is none other than the pure and flawless tathāgatagarbha, as illustrated below.



What deserves special attention here is this: Although adhering to the tathāgatagarbha tradition by claiming the intrinsic purity of the tathāgatagarbha, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* goes a step further than the earlier texts by assimilating the Yogācāric idea of ālayavijñāna into the doctrinal system of the tathāgatagarbha.

Finally, in suggesting that "tathāgatagarbha named ālayavijñāna" is the supporting cause of all, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* seems to be comprised of both tathāgatagarbha thought

[153] This paragraph is translated from the Sanskrit version, which reads: "Tathāgatagarbho ī anādikāla-vividha-prapañca-dauṣṭhulya-vāsanāvāsitaḥ ālayavijñāna-saṁśabdito'vidyāvāsana-bhūmijaiḥ saptabhir vijñānaiḥ saha mahodadhita-raṅgavan nityam avyucchinna-śarīraḥ pravartate anityatā-doṣa-rahita ātmavāda-vinivṛtto 'tyanta- prakṛti-pariśuddhaḥ." See *Saddharma-Laṅkāvatāra-sūtram*, (Buddhist Sanskrit Series No. 3) p. 90. See also Nanjio, p. 220, line 13 to p. 221, line 1 The corresponding Chinese translations are for the most part unclear.

and the Yogācāra doctrines. After close investigation, however, we find that the term "ālayavijñāna" is a borrowing of terminology rather than a doctrinal implantation. The development of "tathāgatagarbha named ālayavijñāna" actually acknowledges the ālayavijñāna possessing many seeds as the pure and abiding tathāgatagarbha. This ālayavijñāna, interpreted from the viewpoint of the tathāgatagarbha, namely the ālayavijñāna centered by tathāgatagarbha, when compared to the ālayavijñāna that is a collection of all seeds as explained in the *Mahāyāna-saṁgraha-śāstra*, is substantially different in so far as "tathāgatagarbha named ālayavijñāna" as the supporting cause is none other than tathāgatagarbha as the supporting cause. That the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* adheres to the tradition insisting on the ultimately pure mind is evident in verses such as:

> Like the mind of white clothes
> is soiled by manovijñāna and habit-energy,
> The defilements of impure habit-energy
> make the mind un-manifest.[154]
>
> Pollution appears in the pure,
> purity does not appear in the polluted.
> Just like a cloud covered sky,
> mind is not revealed.[155]
>
> Just as pure mercury
> cannot be polluted by dirt,
> So it is with pure ālayavijñāna,
> the foundation of sentient beings.[156]

154 "心如白色衣, 意識、習爲垢, 垢習之所污, 令心不顯現", see *Da-Sheng-Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing* 大乘入楞伽經,, in T.16, p.629a.

155 "垢現於淨中, 非淨現於垢. 如雲翳虛空, 心不現亦爾", see *Da-Sheng-Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing* 大乘入楞伽經,, in T.16, p.630a.

156 "如水銀清淨, 塵垢不能染, 藏識淨亦然, 眾生所依止", see *Da-Sheng-Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing* 大乘入楞伽經,,

The similes of white clothes, clear sky, and pure mercury imply the pure mind, ālayavijñāna, or tathāgatagarbha according to the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*. This pure mind of tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna is the supporting cause upon which the sentient beings and the phenomenal world depend, just as soil depends on white clothes and clouds depend on clear sky. This doctrine of an essentially pure tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna as the ultimate supporting cause is what the *Laṅkāvtārasūtra* inherited from the tathāgatagarbha tradition.

II. Meaning of "Producing Cause" Implanted from the Yogācāra School

The *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* continues the tathāgatagarbha tradition by claiming tathāgatagarbha as the "supporting cause" for both saṁsāra and nirvāṇa, but it takes one step forward in suggesting the tathāgatagarbha as the "producing cause" of the phenomenal world.

To discuss this further it is necessary to investigate the mutual relationship between the surface consciousnesses and the deep-rooted tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna.

In our discussion above, we have seen that "... [on] the great ocean [of ālayavijñāna] ... waves [various consciousnesses] roll constantly, [even though] its body subsists uninterruptedly."[157] Here the relationship between ālayavijñāna and other consciousness is just like the relationship between ocean and the waves on surface of the ocean. It can be further inferred that a twofold relationship exists between ocean and waves. That is, the deep ocean or the still water deep in the ocean is the "supporting cause" as well as the "producing cause" of the waves on the surface. In other words, the deep ocean is not

in T.16, p.639b.

[157] See note 151 above.

only the basis upon which waves depend (supporting cause), but is also the producing factor (producing cause) from which the waves take shape. The producing factor (producing cause) is a more intimate and direct cause for producing the product (waves) than the basis (supporting cause) for the water to become the product, i.e., the waves or the surface consciousnesses, because the "producing cause" is actually the original element of the product. It is on the basis of this intimate relationship between "producing cause" and "supporting cause," the dialectical relationship of "neither different nor not-different" between the ocean and the waves can be possible. An example of this dialectical relationship can be found in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* when it explains the relationship between the ālayavijñāna and other consciousness:

> Mahāmati, it is like a lump of clay and the particles of dust making up its substance, they are neither different nor non-different; again, it is like gold and various ornaments made of it. If, Mahāmati, the lump of clay is different from its particles of dust, no lump will ever come out of them. But as it comes out of them it is not different from the particles of dust. Again, if there is no difference between the two, the lump will be indistinguishable from its particles.
>
> Even so, Mahāmati, if the evolving Vijñāna are different from the Ālayavijñāna, even in its original form, the Ālaya cannot be their cause. Again, if they are not different, the cessation of the evolving Vijñānas will mean the cessation of the Ālayavijñāna, but there is no cessation of its original form....[158]

In order to explain the relationship between ālayavijñāna and evolving vijñānas (i.e. the first seven *vijñānas*), two similes are proposed: First, the particle of dust is the original element of clay, and second, gold is the original element of gold ornaments. These two similes demonstrate the relation between the original element and the product, but not the

[158] This is Suzuki's translation, see *The Lankavatara Sutra—A Mahayana Text*, p.34, Taipei: SMC Publishing Inc. 1991.

relation between the supporting basis and what depends on it, as the simile of ocean and waves implies.

It is on the basis of the relation between the original element and the product that the dialectic of "neither different nor not-different" can be established. If clay is different from the particles of dust, then it could not be made up of the latter; but because clay is indeed made up of the latter, clay cannot be "different" from the particles of dust, the original element that constitutes it. On the other hand, if clay is not different from the particles of dust, the former cannot be differentiated from the latter, but because they are actually distinguishable, clay and the particles of dust are not "not-different."

By utilizing this dialectic, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* aims to explain that if the evolving vijñānas, *viz.*, the first seven vijñānas, ie., surface consciousness, are different from the original form of the ālayavijñāna, *viz.*, the tathāgatagarbha, then the evolving vijñānas could not have originated from tathāgatagarbha. But because tathāgatagarbha is indeed the original cause of the evolving vijñānas, tathāgatagarbha could not be "different" from the evolving vijñānas. On the other hand, if tathāgatagarbha is not different from the evolving vijñānas, then tathāgatagarbha would be extinguished when the evolving vijñānas become extinct. But because tathāgatagarbha, *viz.*, the original form of the ālayavijñāna, has not ceased, the evolving vijñānas would not be "not-different."

Original Element (Deep-rooted)	Particles of Dust	Gold	Original Form of the Ālayavijñāna
Developed Product (Surface)	Lump of Clay	Gold Ornaments	Evolving Vijñānas

The above dialectic of "neither different nor not-different" applies only with regard

to the relationship between the original element and the developed product and does not apply to the relationship between the supporting basis and what depends on it. For example, a tree is "neither different nor not-different" from the seed whence the tree originated, but because a tree is obviously different from the earth upon which it relies, it is inappropriate to argue that a tree is "neither different nor not-different" from the earth.

In conclusion, the paragraphs above, though dedicated to an explanation of "neither different nor not-different" in view of the relation between tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna and the evolving vijñānas, an assumption underlying this dialectic is that the tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna is the original element or producing cause of the evolving vijñānas. Just as a tree is produced from a seed, the evolving vijñānas evolve from the seed of tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna.[159]

At this juncture there is a need to clarify what sense the word "cause" (*hetu*) has within the context of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra.* Consequently, we now turn to some passages in the sūtra.

1. Mahāmati, tathāgatagarbha is of the nature of cause of the wholesome and the unwholesome; it is the producer of all forms of life. It functions just as an actor takes on all forms of life devoid of ātman and what belongs to ātman.[160]

2. This garbha of tathāgata is the cause of the wholesome and the unwholesome; it can universally develop and produce all forms of life. Just like an actor, it transforms and appears as various forms of life devoid of Ātman and what

[159] This implication is well expressed in the verse: "discrimination named manovijñāna that is accompanied by the five vijñānas is like images and waterfall that arise from the seeds of mind", (分別名意識, 及與五識俱. 如影像暴流, 從心種子起), in *Da-Sheng-Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing* 大乘入楞伽經, see T.16, p.626c.

[160] tathāgatagarbho mahāmate kuśalākuśalahetukaḥ, sarvajanmagatikartā. Pravartate naṭavadgatisaṁkaṭa, ātmātmīyavarjitaḥ ["s" in text] (Sanskrit version) See the Nanjio edition of *The Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*, p. 220, lines 9-.

belongs to it.[161]

3. The garbha of tathāgata is the cause of the wholesome and the unwholesome; therefore, it can serve as a cause-and-condition of life-and-death of the six forms of life. Just like an actor performs various skills, because sentient beings depend on the tathāgatagarbha, they undergo life-and-death in the five forms of life. But Mahāmati, tathāgatagarbha is devoid of Ātman and what belongs to it.[162]

4. This tathāgatagarbha is the cause of the wholesome and the unwholesome; it can universally develop and produce all [forms of] life, just like an actor takes on various forms of life devoid of Ātman and what belongs to it.[163]

5. The tathāgatagarbha becomes the cause of the wholesome and the unwholesome; it is the producer of all the lives and forms of life. Like an actor, it is free from Ātman and what belongs to Ātman, [but] the misfortune of lives arrives.[164]

Among these versions, the Wei version (No. 3) is obviously very different. First, the statement "It can universally develop and produce all forms of life" that appears in other versions, appears in the Wei version as "It can serve as a cause-and-condition of life-and-death of the six forms of life." By skipping the active verbs "develop and produce" (興造, xing-zao), the Wei version cleverly avoids the subjective and active implication of the tathāgatagarbha as a "producer." Second, the statement "It transforms and appears as various forms of life" in the other versions appears in the Wei version as "undergo life-and-

[161] 如來之藏是善不善因, 能遍興造一切趣生. 譬如伎兒, 變現諸趣, 離我我所. (Song version) in *Leng-Qie-A-Ba-Duo-Luo-Bao-Jing* 楞伽阿跋多羅寶經,, see T.16, p.510a.

[162] 如來之藏是善不善因故, 能與六道作生死因緣. 譬如伎兒出種種伎, 眾生依於如來藏故, 五道生死. 大慧! 而如來藏離我我所. (Wei version) in *Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing* 入楞伽經, see T.16, p.556b.

[163] 如來藏是善不善因, 能遍興造一切趣生. 譬如伎兒, 變現諸趣, 離我我所. (Tang version) in *Da-Sheng-Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing* 大乘入楞伽經, see T.16, p.619b.

[164] de bzhin gshegs pa'i snying po dge ba dang mi dge ba'i rgyur gyur pa, skye ba dang 'gro ba thams cad byed pa, bdag dang bdag gi sangs pa ni, gar mkhan bzhin du, 'gro ba'i nyam nga bar 'jug ste, (Tibetan version) *Ḥphags-pa laṅ-kar gśegs-paḥi theg-pa chen-poḥi mdo*, Peking edition of *Tibetan Tripitaka* Vol.29, p. 64, leaf 156a, line 7-8.

death in the five forms of life" following the additional words "sentient beings depend on the tathāgatagarbha," words not found in any of the other versions.

Apparently, the Wei version adds these words in order to define tathāgatagarbha as the supporting cause upon which the phenomenal world of life and death depends. However, it should be questioned whether such an interpretation faithfully conveys the original intention of this paragraph. In other words, what is the credibility of the Wei version here? Without doubt, the three Chinese versions were translated at different times by different translators, and it may have been that the Sanskrit originals of these three Chinese translations were dissimilar to some extent. By comparing the versions, it can be seen that the Wei version is much more voluminous and is inclined to adding words which may have been the translator's tactic to smooth out the context. Although this style of translation may help the reader to understand the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, obscure and abstruse both in wording and meaning, it may also have been that the doctrinal stance or personal viewpoint of the translator infiltrated into the translation intentionally or incidentally, which makes the credibility of the translation somewhat doubtful. Actually, no sooner had the Tang version made its presence, some Chinese scholars indicated that "the translation of Bodhiruci has many faults."[165]

Except for the Wei version, the other versions seem to be quite in agreement. All of them indicate that tathāgatagarbha is the cause of the wholesome and the unwholesome and is also the producer[166] of all forms of life. Just as an actor performs various skills and plays

[165] "流支之義多舛", in *Xin-Yi-Da-Sheng-Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing-Xu* 新譯大乘入楞伽經序, in T.16, p.587a.

[166] The meaning of the "producer" (kartṛ) is negated in the following context of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* by stating: "the heretical philosophers do not comprehend it and regard it as the producer (kāraṇa)" ("外道不覺, 計爲作者", see T.16, p.510b) At first sight, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* seems to negate the existence of the "producer"; after a comprehensive examination, however, it is found that the "producer" that has been negated in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* is the "Ātman", the "pudgala", the "*saṁtati*", the "*pradhāna*", the "*īśvara*"

different roles, the tathāgatagarbha manifests as various forms of life,[167] but the tathāgatagarbha itself is devoid of the Ātman and what belongs to it.

Nevertheless, when Takasaki cites the sentence "The tathāgatagarbha is the cause of the wholesome and the unwholesome; it can universally develop and produce all forms of life," he argues that the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* replaced the word "Ātman" with the word "tathāgatagarbha" and thus made the latter the supporting cause of the saṁsāric world. In addition, this theory that suggests the tathāgatagarbha as the supporting cause reminds us of the view already suggested in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra.*[168] Like Takasaki, Yin-shun explains this section of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* and argues that the statement "The tathāgatagarbha is the cause of the wholesome and the unwholesome" simply means that the tathāgatagarbha is the supporting cause of life and death, but not that the tathāgatagarbha, that is to say, the tathatā, can produce the wholesome and the unwholesome or propel the cycle of life and death. It is simply that the wholesome and the unwholesome, life and death, all depend on the tathāgatagarbha, just as the clouds depend on the sky.[169] Obviously, Yin-shun based his assumption on the traditional doctrine that takes the tathāgatagarbha as the supporting cause and probably consulted the interpretation of the Wei version, so that he took "the cause of the wholesome and the unwholesome" as the "supporting cause."

After a closer examination of the phrase "the cause of the wholesome and the

etc. suggested by heretical philosophers, but not the "producer" aspect of the "tathāgatagarbha" or the "genuine self" (真我) suggested in the tathāgatagarbha tradition.

[167] The simile of "actor" (*naṭa*) in this sentence refers to tathāgatagarbha, since the verse following this paragraph states that "the mind dances like an actor" ("*naṭavannṛtyate cittaṁ*", in the Nanjio edition of *The Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*, p.224), and the "mind" (*citta*) according to the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* is generally a synonym of the tathāgatagarbha or ālayavijñāna, as for example in the statement, "the ālayavijñāna is named citta" (藏識說名心, in T.16, p.626c)

[168] A translation of the Japanese found in *The Formation of the Tathāgatagarbha Thought* (如來藏思想の形成 Nyoraizoo shiso no keisei) Shunjusha (春秋社) Tokyo, 1974 (3rd edition 1978). For details, see pp.246~247

[169] See the details in *A Study on Tathāgatagarbha (如來藏之研究)*, pp.246~247, Taipei: Zheng-Wen 正聞 Publisher, 1992

unwholesome," it can be seen that that the meaning of the word "cause" in this context need not to be traced back to the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* or the *Ratna-gotra-vibhāga*, where it is interpreted as the "supporting cause," but rather, because the word "cause" in this context means "producer" or "seed," it is better to understand it as the "producing cause."

According to the Sanskrit version, the tathāgatagarbha is the "sarvajanmagatikartā," namely the "kartṛ" of all forms of life. The word "kartṛ" signifies the doer, maker, producer, etc., so the sense of "the subject and the active" is clear in contrast only to the static and passive object upon which all beings depend. The Tibetan translation of *kartṛ* is "*byed pa*" which means "doer," and when utilized as a verb it means "to do, make, create, produce, etc." It sufficiently echoes the Chinese translation "develop and produce (興造) as found in the sentence "It can universally develop and produce all forms of life." The words "develop and produce" refer exactly to a "producer." The English translation by Suzuki based on the Sanskrit version reads, "The Tathāgata-garbha holds within it the cause for both good and evil, and by it all the forms of existence are produced."[170] The verb "produce," just as the Chinese verb "興造," reveals the subjective and dynamic implication. The Japanese translation by Yasui, Kosai reads, "The tathāgatagarbha becomes the cause of good and evil and becomes the maker of all the threefold lives and the six forms of life."[171]

By comparing the Sanskrit version, the Tibetan version, the Song version, and the Tang version, and by consulting the English translation by Suzuki and the Japanese translation by Yasui, it can be concluded that the real intention of this section is that the

[170] See *The Lankavatara Sutra—A Mahayana Text*, p.190. Taipei: SMC Publishing Inc. 1991.
[171] See "Nyoraizo ha zen to fuzen no in to nari, issai no shou (sanze) to shu (roku shu) to no sakusha to nari" ("如來藏は、善と不善の因となり、一切の生（三世）と趣（六趣）との作者となり"), see 安井広済 (Yasui, Kosai): *A Study on the Original Text of the Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra* (入楞伽經の原典研究 Nyu ryogakyoo no genten kenkyu) in Otani Gakuho (大谷学報) 48-2, 1968

tathāgatagarbha, being a "doer" or "maker," is able to "produce" all phenomena of life and is therefore the "cause" of the wholesome and the unwholesome. This "cause," being endowed with the subjective sense of the "maker" and the dynamic function of "producing," is no longer the "supporting cause," statically and stably supporting all existences, but rather the "producing cause" that gives rise to the phenomenal world, just as a seed produces the tree. It is certainly significant that the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* extended the meaning of "cause," as conveyed by the compound term "tathāgatagarbha," from a sense of a "supporting cause" inherited from the tathāgatagarbha tradition to a "producing cause" bearing a dynamic significance.

Nevertheless, one should inquire how tathāgatagarbha, originally the ultimately pure "supporting cause," had its meaning transformed into "producing cause." To answer this question it is necessary to consider the reciprocal effect between tathāgatagarbha and ālayavijñāna, or by extension, the tathāgatagarbha tradition and the Yogācāra School.

The tathāgatagarbha tradition and the Yogācāra School originated in south India and north India respectively and were active in the later period of Mahāyāna Buddhism. When these two streams of thinking confronted each other somewhere in central India, because both were based on their own doctrinal standpoint, they may have been forced to refute each other's doctrinal tenets, or alternatively to reinterpret the theory of the other side in order to digest and assimilate the opponent's theories into one's own doctrinal system. In the words of Brian Edward Brown,

> It is through the refractive light of the *Tathāgatagarbha* as unconditional absolute, that the *Ālayavijñāṇa* is referred to as the realm of *Dharma-kāya*, the fundamentally pure consciousness, subsisting uninterruptedly like the depths of the ocean, permanent and unmoved despite the agitation of its waves. Similarly, the

> *Tathāgatagarbha*'s already mentioned casual function, its union with the seven *vijñānas,* and its momentary permeability by those consciousnesses, reflect the nuances of its identification with the *Ālaya.*[172]

Admittedly, the ālayavijñāna in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* is identical to the tathāgatagarbha and therefore becomes the pure vijñāna and the fundamental basis.[173] On the other hand, the ālayavijñāna is the aggregate of all seeds (*sarva-bīja*), having the function of initiating all existences. Specifically, the ālayavijñāna produces the seven vijñānas inwardly and manifests the physical body (*deha*), the daily utensils (*bhoga*), and the physical world of life (*pratiṣṭāna*) outwardly.[174] Once the attribute of "all seeds" or "producing cause" possessed by the ālayavijñāna is added to tathāgatagarbha, the combination makes the statement "The tathāgatagarbha is the cause of the wholesome and the unwholesome; it can universally develop and produce all forms of life" reasonable and understandable.

The combination of tathāgatagarbha with the theory of seed (*bīja*) is an important development within tathāgatagarbha thought that was advanced by the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra.* Although prior to the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* the concept of the seed had been implied in tathāgatagarbha, it was still very indirect and indistinct. For example, the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* in the very early stage of the tathāgatagarbha tradition alludes to the idea that the tathāgatagarbha is entangled within defilement by means of nine metaphors. Among them, the sixth and the eighth metaphors imply that the tathāgatagarbha is the "flawless seed." The sixth metaphor gives an account of a seed existing inside the shell. The seed may gradually grow to be a giant tree provided that it is bedded in sound soil condition.

[172] See the details in *The Buddha Nature—A Study of the Tathāgatagarbha and Ālayavijñāna*, p.181, Delhi: Motilal Brnarsidass Publishers, 1994.

[173] As expressed in the verse "Just as pure mercury / Can not be polluted by dirt / So it is with pure ālayavijñāna / The foundation of sentient beings." For details, see nt. 154 above and the previous section of this chapter.

[174] As expressed in the statement "The ālayavijñāna suddenly manifests all realms of body, appliance and land" (藏識頓現於身及資生、國土一切境界), see T.16, p.596b.

The eighth metaphor gives an account of an embryo of the holy king conceived in an ugly and humble woman who is not aware of whom she had conceived.[175] The eighth metaphor is a very basic metaphor of tathāgatagarbha thought.

The Sanskrit compound "tathāgata-garbha" can be understood literally as the "tathāgata-embryo," that is, the tathāgata in an immature stage. That tathāgatagarbha is the cause of the tathāgata, is analogous to the embryo being the cause of the holy king and the seed of the giant tree. These metaphors in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra,* though implicit, have the possibility to extend the tathāgatagarbha doctrine to include the idea of a flawless seed. A similar teaching is also found in the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, which states, "My body possesses the seed of Buddha nature."[176] However, whether it be the notion of seed expounded in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* or the "seed of Buddha nature" expounded in the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, the term "seed" refers simply to the "flawless seed" that gives rise to the wholesome dharmas and that guarantees the attainment of Buddhahood. In this context, it does not refer to the Yogācāric sense of "all seeds" (sarva-bījaka), which could refer to either or both the wholesome or the defiled, flawless or faulty, and which is capable of producing all the phenomenal worlds.

As a text in the middle stage of the tathāgatagarbha doctrine, the *Ratna-gotra-vibhāga* explains that sentient beings are endowed with "Buddha nature" or belong to the "Buddha-gotra." The text explains Buddha-gotra to be of two kinds:

> There are two kinds of Buddha-gotra. The first is like the treasure in the ground; the second is like the fruit on a tree ... Relying on the two kinds of Buddha-gotra, the threefold kāya is attained.[177]

[175] For details see Chapter Two of this thesis.
[176] "我身即有佛性種子," see 大般涅槃經, T.12, p.410c.
[177] "佛性有二種, 一者如地藏, 二者如樹果...依二種佛性, 得出三種身," 究竟一乘寶性論, see T.31, p.839a.

Since the threefold Buddha-kāya is established on the basis of the Buddha-gotra, the Buddha-gotra appears more like the "supporting cause" than the "producing cause." The *Ratna-gotra-vibhāga* does not interpret Buddha-gotra or tathāgatagarbha from the view of the Yogācāric sense of seed, despite the fact that tathāgatagarbha as the intrinsic potential for the attainment of Buddhahood is similar to the Buddha seed possessed by the bodhisattvas. The *Yogācārya-bhūmi-śāstra*, which is a representative work of the Yogācāra School, explains the two sorts of gotra or bīja in the following terms.

> What is gotra? In summary, there are two kinds: First, the gotra of the abiding *intrinsic* nature; the second, gotra achieved by practice.
>
> The gotra of the abiding *intrinsic* nature refers to the bodhisattvas who possess the six excellences. and who have obtained these Dharmic [excellences] from having passed through immeasurable lives. This is named "gotra of abiding intrinsic nature."
>
> The gotra achieved by practice refers to [the bodhisattva] who has obtained [this status] by having practiced the roots of virtues previously. This is named "gotra achieved by practice" ... this gotra is also named bīja, also named dhātu, also named prakṛiti.[178]

The former, namely the gotra of the abiding intrinsic nature, is originally innate in bodhisattvas from beginningless time. It is actually the flawless seed directed to Buddhahood, and essentially speaking it is the tathāgatagarbha innate in all sentient beings. Though it is true that the Yogācāra School tends to explain tathāgatagarbha as the inherent flawless seed, the *Ratna-gotra-vibhāga* does not interpret the tathāgatagarbha as the "flawless seed." The advancement and combining of tathāgatagarbha with the idea of

[178] "云何種姓? 謂略有二種: 一, 本性住種姓, 二, 習所成種姓. 本性住種性者, 謂諸菩薩六處殊勝, 有如是相, 從無始世展轉傳來, 法爾所得, 是名本性住種姓. 習所成種姓者, 謂先串習善根所得, 是名習所成種姓...又此種姓, 亦名種子, 亦名爲界, 亦名爲性". 瑜伽師地論 See T.30, p.478c.

"seed," especially in the Yogācāric sense of "all seeds," can be viewed as an accomplishment of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra.*

Under the influence of the Yogācāra School, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* identifies ālayavijñāna with tathāgatagarbha, and therefore, to that extent, it is natural and reasonable to interpret tathāgatagarbha from the perspective of "all seed." That is to say, tathāgatagarbha and ālayavijñāna are viewed as synonyms in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, and the latter is considered to be the "consciousness of all seeds" (*sarva-bīja-vijñāna*); consequently, tathāgatagarbha logically becomes synonymous with "all seeds" or the "seeds of mind." The *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* states:

> The monovijñāna named discrimination accompanied by the five vijñānas is like images and waterfall that arise from the seeds of mind.[179]

These "seeds of mind" giving rise to the monovijñāna and the five vijñānas inwardly are also named "seeds of consciousness" or "all seeds" and manifest various forms of life outwardly and transmigrate in the cycle of life and death:

> Such seeds of consciousness revolve and manifest the external world.[180]
>
> The seeds inside consciousness can manifest the mentally objectified world.[181]
>
> The consciousness is the seed of life and death. Because there is seed, there is life.[182]
>
> The various seeds from which various forms of life [possessing] various defilements and sufferings can evolve are called "all seeds."[183]

The statement "The various seeds from which various forms of life ... can evolve" resembles the claim that "the tathāgatagarbha is the cause of the wholesome and the

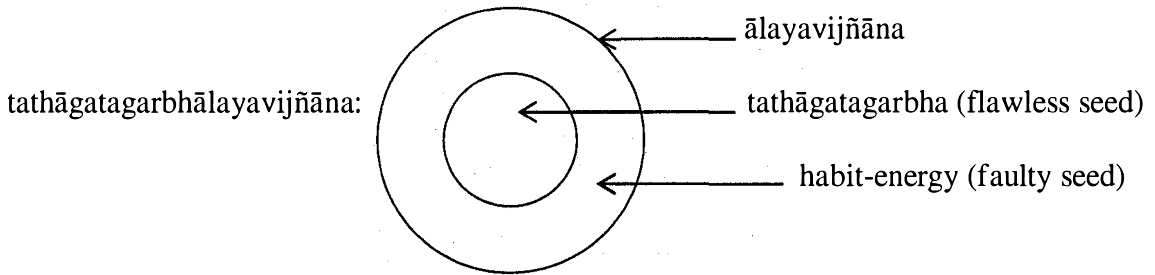
[179] "分別名意識, 及與五識俱. 如影像暴流, 從心種子起", in *Da-Sheng-Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing* 大乘入楞伽經, T.16, p.626c.
[180] "如是諸種子, 轉動見(現)境界", in *Da-Sheng-Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing* 大乘入楞伽經, T.16, p.601c.
[181] "識中諸種子, 能現心境界", in *Da-Sheng-Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing* 大乘入楞伽經, T.16, p.626a.
[182] "識爲生死種, 有種故有生", in *Da-Sheng-Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing* 大乘入楞伽經, T.16, p.628c.
[183] "種種諸種子, 能感諸趣生. 種種衆雜苦, 名一切種子", in *Da-Sheng-Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing* 大乘入楞伽經, T.16, p.626c

unwholesome; it can universally develop and produce all forms of life" cited above. The tathāgatagarbha as "the various seeds" or "all seeds" is able to produce the myriads of things and also the turbulent flow of life and death. Finally, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* implants the attribute of the ālayavijñāna as "an aggregate of all seeds" and its function of manifesting the phenomenal world onto the tathāgatagarbha through the combination of both.

However, the "grafting" has caused a logical conflict in the newly developed doctrine; because tathāgatagarbha is an originally and ultimately pure substance, it can be the pure and flawless seed only within the context of "being a seed." Moreover, how would it be possible for such a "flawless seed" to produce this faulty world of transmigration? In order to solve this dilemma, it is necessary to review the combination condition of the tathāgatagarbha and the ālayavijñāna. As stated above, "Tathāgata ... is named ālayavijñāna, having been influenced by habit-energy of various dull obscure reasonings from beginningless time, [but] is completely pure in its essence." In this sense, the tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna can be viewed as a synthesis of the pure and the defiled, namely the flawless seed that establishes Buddhahood and the faulty seed that establishes transmigration. The tathāgatagarbha is the flawless seed, or the producing cause of Buddhahood; the ālayavijñāna has tathāgatagarbha at its centre, but is covered by the faulty seed of habit-energy, viz. the producing cause of the imperfect life. In the combination of both as tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna, the ālayavijñāna becomes both the flawless seed (*ālayavijñāna* with *tathāgatagarbha* at the center) and the faulty seed (*ālayavijñana*) as defined above.[184]

[184] In this regard, it can be inferred that the tathāgatagarbha is superficially different from the ālayavijñāna or the tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna in which the defilement-covered condition is emphasized.

Therefore, it is under the influence of Yogācāric thought concerning ālayavijñāna that the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* interprets the tathāgatagarbha as "all seeds", i.e., the "producing cause" of the phenomenal world. It is due to the combination of the tathāgatagarbha and the ālayavijñāna, as expressed by '*tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna*' in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, that the twofold function of the flawless seed and the faulty seed is revealed.



3) Conclusion

Throughout the history of the tathāgatagarbha tradition, tathāgatagarbha has been explained consistently as the "supporting cause" upon which all existences depend. This basic claim is followed in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatva-nirdeśa-parivarta-sūtra*, the *Ratna-gotra-vibhāga*, and the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*. However, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* that was compiled later not only inherits this traditional doctrine of the "supporting cause," but also goes further to suggest the significance of the "producing cause." As a result, the tathāgatagarbha doctrine found in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* comprises a twofold meaning of "supporting basis" upon which both the saṁsāric world and the nirvāṇa realm rely and the "producing seed" from which all phenomenal beings originate.

To investigate the tathāgatagarbha doctrine in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, the overwhelming influence of the Yogācāra School must be taken into consideration. The *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* was compiled when the Yogācāra School was very prosperous, and thus

it inevitably borrowed a great deal of Yogācāric terminologies as well as assimilating some Yogācāric theory. As a matter of fact, such ideas as "five dharma," "threefold svabhāva," "eight vijñāna," "twofold nairātmya," and so on often mentioned in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* are all important doctrines of the Yogācāra School. Consequently it is no wonder that the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* is mentioned as one of the so-named "six sutras and eleven commentaries" upon which the Yogācāra philosophy is established. The most vibrant feature of Yogācāric influence upon the tathāgatagarbha doctrine as found in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* is undoubtedly the confluence of the tathāgatagarbha and the ālayavijñāna. All through the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, "tathāgatagarbha" and "ālayavijñāna" are mentioned inter-changeably and a newly formed compound, "tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna," can be found in it. While the term "ālayavijñāna" is, on one hand, a borrowing from Yogācāric terminologies, on the other hand, it is an implantation of the Yogācāric doctrine into the tathāgatagarbha scheme.

First, to suggest tathāgatagarbha as the "supporting cause" and to suggest the ālayavijñāna as the "supporting cause" is to distinguish different doctrinal systems of pure mind theory and impure mind theory respectively. That the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* suggests "tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna" as the "supporting cause" does not mean that the ultimately supporting basis of all existences is some kind of synthesis comprising the wholesome and the defiled altogether. Rather, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* follows the tathāgatagarbha tradition that argues for a theory of "pure mind," and thus regards the ultimately pure tathāgatagarbha as the supporting cause of all beings. Although the tathāgatagarbha and the ālayavijñāna are generally mentioned as synonyms in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, when analyzing the relationship between the two from the perspective of the other, the defiled

mind is contained by the wholesome mind, but it is not the case that the wholesome mind coordinates its activities with the defiled mind on a fifty-fifty basis. In other words, "tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna" has as its central nucleus tathāgatagarbha; therefore, it is on the basis of the pure tathāgatagarbha that all beings are established. In this sense, the suggestion that "tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna" or "ālayavijñāna" functions as the "supporting cause" is simply an instance of borrowing an idea from the Yogācāra doctrine and is not an essential implantation of a doctrine, because there is no fundamental shift in the basic viewpoint that the pure tathāgatagarbha is the supporting cause merely with the addition of the "ālayavijñāna."

On the other hand, a trace of doctrinal implantation can be seen in the introduction of the idea of "producing caùse." That is to say, because tathāgatagarbha is understood to be identical to the ālayavijñāna and because the latter according to the Yogācāra School is bestowed with the "consciousness of all seeds" (*sarva-bīja-vijñāna*), tathāgatagarbha must also be endowed with this new characteristic of "all seeds." According to Yogācāra doctrine, inwardly, the seeds of consciousness or the seeds of the mind produce the seven consciousnesses and outwardly manifest as physical reality. Therefore, the originally motionless and changeless tathāgatagarbha, due to its identification with all seeds, is capable of producing all consciousnesses and become manifest as all existences. The *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* states:

> Tathāgatagarbha does not occur because the five dharmas, the threefold svabhāvas, the eight vijñānas, and the twofold nairātmya are realized."[185]

[185] This translation is according to the Sanskrit version [tathāgatagarbhaḥ pañcadharma-svabhāva-dharmanairātmya-darśanān nivartate. Nanjio p. 221, line 16] and the Tibetan version [de bzhin gshegs pa'i snying po... chos lnga dang rang bzhin dang chos la bdag med par mthong bas ... ldog par 'gyur te. Peking edition of *Tibetan Tripitaka* Vol.29, leaf 157a, line 1]. The Chinese versions are slightly different. The Wei

That the tathāgatagarbha has taken up the feature of the ālayavijñāna of producing imperfect phenomena can be inferred from the above quotation. In realizing the knowledge of the Yogācāra doctrine, the seeds that produce "tathāgatagarbha as ālayavijñāna" subside. In this case, the compound term "tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna" in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, i.e., "ālayavijñāna as the consciousness of all seeds," is not only a borrowing of terminology, but reflects a fundamental implantation of Yogācāric doctrine.

"Ālayavijñāna" in the "Tathāgatagarbha -ālayavijñāna"	As Supporting Cause	Terminological Borrowing from the Yogācāra School	The nucleus of the ālayavijñāna remains the pure tathāgatagarbha.
	As Producing Cause	Doctrinal Implantation from the Yogācāra Teaching	The tathāgatagarbha is all seeds of the ālayavijñāna so as to generate all existences.

Finally, in examining tathāgatagarbha as "the first cause," it has been found that in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* the tathāgatagarbha not only follows the traditional meaning of "supporting cause," but also appears as the "producing cause." The combination of the tathāgatagarbha with the ālayavijñāna gave the former the added meaning of "all seeds" (*sarva-bījaka*) and as a result, the tathāgatagarbha, just as all seeds grow to become plants, became endowed with the function of producing all forms of existences. Thus, the tathāgatagarbha doctrine found in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* reveals a more vivid situation, a more dynamic function, and a more comprehensive range compared to that found in the

version (入楞伽經) reads: "the tathāgatagarbha, due to truthful realization of the five dharma, the substance and appearance, the dharma-nairātmya, hence does not arise". ("如來藏, 如實見五法、體相、法無我, 故不生", in T.16. p.556c) The Song version (楞伽阿跋多羅寶經) reads: "It is extinguished when realizing the tathāgatagarbha, the five dharma, the intrinsic nature, the pudgala- nairātmya and dharma- nairātmya" ("見如來藏、五法、自性、人法無我, 則滅", in T.16, p.510b), which is probably incompetent to convey the original intension of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra.*

earlier texts. It is safe to argue that a very important, if not singular influence that contributed to this development, is without doubt the Yogācāra.

The Tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*

Category	Supporting Cause	Producing Cause	
		Flawless Seeds	All Seeds
Attribute	Static Substance	Dynamic Mechanism	
Function	Supporting All Existences	Arousing the Motivation to Seek Buddhahood	Producing All Beings
Source	Inherited from the Tathāgatagarbha Tradition		Implanted from the Yogācāra School

CHAPTER FIVE

TATHĀGATAGARBHA DOCTRINE IN THE *LAṄKĀVATĀRASŪTRA* (3) — PARINIṢPĀNNASVABHĀVASTATHĀGATAGARBHAHṚDAYA

Pariniṣpanasvabhāvastathāgatagarbhahṛdaya is one of the newly coined compounds found in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra.* This compound can be interpreted to mean "pariniṣpanasvabhāva is the very essence (*hṛdaya*) of the tathāgatagarbha." Grammatically, the term "pariniṣpanasvabhāvastathāgatagarbha" can be understood as a karma-dhāraya compound that designates "tathāgatagarbha" to be contextually the same as "pariniṣpanasvabhāva." In other words, tathāgatagarbha, according to the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra,* is pariniṣpanasvabhāva, one of the three svabhāvas[186] in Yogācāra philosophy. Such a clear and definite expression reveals the overwhelming influence of the Yogācāra school upon the tathāgatagarbha tradition. In addition, tathāgatagarbha that is contextually the same as pariniṣpanasvabhāva, has a broader frame of reference, and consequently has been enriched in meaning.

Both tathāgatagarbha and pariniṣpanasvabhāva have been explained from different perspectives in different periods of time and in different texts, and thus these terms can be understood variously, depending upon the situation. Therefore, in order to understand what the term "pariniṣpanasvabhāva" means and how it extended the meaning of "tathāgatagarbha" from the Yogācāric perspective, it is necessary to examine this problem from two points of view.

First, what exactly was the content and nature of tathāgatagarbha prior to the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*? Second, in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* and earlier texts, how was the term

[186] The parikalpita-svabhāva, the paratantra-svabhāva and the pariniṣpanna-svabhāva.

"parinişpanasvabhāva" interpreted? That is, was it comprehended ontologically or epistemologically? What precisely is the definition of the word "parinişpanasvabhāva," and what is the range of its meaning? It is on the basis of a clear analysis of the two points of views expressed above that it would be possible to infer which aspect of tathāgatagarbha became emphasized and how its contents became enriched when it was combined with parinişpanasvabhāva.

In tracing the earlier meaning of the word "tathāgatagarbha," this thesis has focused its attention on the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* and the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, because these two scriptures were the forerunners of the tathāgatagarbha philosophy constructed by the writers of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*. On the other hand, we should consider the interpretation of parinişpanasvabhāva expressed in the early texts of the Yogācāra school – i.e., the *Saṁdhinirmocanasūtra* and the *Yogācārya-bhūmi-śāstra*, as well as the later texts, such as the *Mahāyāna-saṁgraha-śāstra* that systematically established the Yogācāra philosophy, in order to gain a better understanding and analysis of the term "parinişpanasvabhāva" in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*,

1) Expansion and Extent of Tathāgatagarbha

We have seen that the development of the tathāgatagarbha tradition was a historical process moving from simplicity to complexity,[187] a process that implies a transformation of

[187] The view that development refers to a movement from the simple to the complex, as discussed in Chapter Two of this thesis, seems to be a common consensus among many scholars who have obtained such a view through textual studies. According to their research, the tathāgatagarbha tradition developed gradually after the nirvāṇa of the historical Buddha. Furthermore, although the development of the tathāgatagarbha teaching itself can be classified into the initial, the middle and the later stages, this historical view is not acceptable to some Vajra-yāna scholars, such as Tan, Xi-yong who believes that the origin of the tathāgatagarbha thinking is rather early, even as early as the time Sakyamuni Buddha when there was the teaching of the Great Perfection (大圓滿) based on the tathāgatagarbha teaching. See the details in *Leng Qie Jin Dao Du* 楞伽經導讀 *(An Introduction of the Laṅkāvatārasūtra)* p.45, Taipei: Comprehensive Buddha Culture 全佛文化, 1999

the tathāgatagarbha doctrine from primordial to comprehensive. At the beginning of the tathāgatagarbha tradition, the term "tathāgatagarbha" simply refered to the transcendental wisdom of the tathāgatas. With the passing of time, the contents and nature of tathāgatagarbha were expounded, deepened and enriched from different perspectives and texts. As a result, the meaning of the term "tathāgatagarbha" was no longer confined to the earlier definition of tathāgata-wisdom, but was extended to include "Dharma nature of suchness" that is realized by the tathāgata-wisdom. Therefore, the implication of the term "tathāgatagarbha" changed from the "realizing-wisdom" to the "realized-realm" and also became extended from simply "tathāgata-wisdom" to an integration of both wisdom and realm.

I. Tathāgata-Wisdom in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*

The *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, as acknowledged in the academic community, is a relatively early scripture of the tathāgatagarbha tradition. The most essential doctrine of this tradition that all sentient beings within the defiled world of afflictions possess the intrinsically pure tathāgatagarbha, has been conveyed in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* by means of the nine metaphors such as the tathāgata inside the withered lotus, the pure honey surrounded by a swarm of bees, and so on that have been mentioned previously.[188] However, the implications of these similes should be investigated so that we will be able to understand the specific contents of this intrinsically pure tathāgatagarbha.

As introduced in the second chapter of this thesis, according to the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* the content of the tathāgatagarbha is in the main, the tathāgata-

[188] See Chapter Two of this thesis for detail. The remaining seven are: the grain wrapped inside the husk, the gold brick dropped into a filthy place, the extensive deposit of gold buried under the earth, the seed and sprout inside the shell, the Tathāgata's statue made of all jewels enwrapped within a piece of foul cloth, the embryo of the holy king conceived in an ugly and humble woman, and the gold statue inside the burned-black mold.

wisdom that is supramundane and transcendental. This perfect tathāgatagarbha or tathāgata-wisdom is the doctrinal basis that not only accounts for the attainment of Buddhahood by all sentient beings, but also guarantees that all sentient beings will attain Buddhahood.

In Amoghavajra's version of the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, the opposite of the term "tathāgata-garbha" (如來藏 *ru-lai-zang*) is usually "affliction-garbha" (煩惱藏 *fan-nao-zang*), probably out of concern for linguistic symmetry. Generally speaking, tathāgata-garbha in opposition to defilements or affliction-garbha is often presented as tathāgata-wisdom, and thus we see such passages as the following:

> ... in order to eliminate affliction-garbha and to purify the *tathāgata-wisdom* for their sake,[189]
>
> ... removing afflictions and purifying *tathāgata-wisdom,*[190]
>
> Affliction and all unwholesome acts
> that conceal the most eminent body
> Should be diligently purified and eliminated
> in order to reveal the *tathāgata-wisdom,*[191]
>
> All sentient beings enwrap *tathāgata-wisdom* with afflictions.[192]

In the above quotations, we see that the content of tathāgatagarbha is none other than tathāgata-wisdom. This tathāgatagarbha or tathāgata-wisdom is unable to manfest itself in so far as it is covered by afflictions and unwholesome acts as conditioned by sentient beings. It is not until afflictions have been eliminated and unwholesome karma has been removed that the light of tathāgatagarbha or tathāgata-wisdom can shine forth. This doctrine that tathāgata-garbha/tathāgata-wisdom is covered by afflictions is frequently seen in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* in such statements as:

189 "爲彼除害煩惱藏故, 淨如來智故", see T.16, p.461c.
190 "淨除煩惱, 淨如來智", see T. 16, p.458c.
191 "煩惱眾惡業, 覆弊(蔽)最勝身, 當勤淨除斷, 顯出如來智", see T.16, p.459a.
192 "諸有情以煩惱裹如來智", see, T.16, p.462b.

> "Afflictions cover externally, tathāgata- wisdom resides internally,"[193]
>
> "All sentient beings, like the molded gold statue, is wrapped by the mud of afflictions on the outside, and in the spacious interior filled totally with the treasure of the flawless wisdom of Buddh-Dharma."[194]

Tathāgata-garbha concealed by afflictions is "tathāgata-wisdom," "flawless wisdom of Buddha-dharma," and so on. In view of the above, it can be inferred that in the initial stage of the tathāgatagarbha tradition, the main content, if not the only content, of tathāgatagarbha was tathāgata-wisdom.

According to a recently deceased scholar of Buddhism in China and Taiwan, Yin-shun, even before the term "tathāgatagarbha" had been formulated, tathāgata-garbha thought was already implicitly conveyed in the *Gaṇḍa-vyūha-sūtra.*[195] In the chapter *Tathāgatotpatti-saṁbhava* of the sūtra, we read:

> There is no sentient being who does not possess tathāgata-wisdom. It is only that sentient beings are bewildered and do not realize tathāgata-wisdom.... Tathāgata-wisdom, no-characteristic-wisdom, no-obstacle-wisdom are possessed by all sentient beings, but ignorant sentient beings covered by bewildered perverted views, do not know, do not see, and are not confident. How is it that they do not know nor see that tathāgata's complete wisdom resides inside their bodies? ... Tathāgata-wisdom resides inside their bodies. (It is) no different than the Buddha.[196]

This paragraph according to which the tathāgatagarbha inherent within the sentient beings is the omniscient wisdom of the tathāgata and which is found quoted later in the *Ratna-*

[193] "煩惱於外而覆蓋, 如來之智處於內", see, T.16, p. 464a.

[194] "一切有情如金像模, 外爲煩惱泥所覆裹; 於內虛沖, 滿有佛法無漏知(智)寶", see, T.16, p.464a. See chapter two for more examples.

[195] See the details in *Zu Lai Zang Zhi Yan Jiu* 如來藏之研究 *(A Study on Tathāgatagarbha)*, pp. 98~103, Taipei: Zheng-Wen 正聞 Publisher, 1992.

[196] "無眾生身如來智慧不具足者, 但眾生顛倒, 不知如來智...如來智慧、無相智慧、無礙智慧, 具足在於眾生身中, 但愚癡眾生顛倒想覆, 不知不見, 不生信心...云何如來具足智慧在於身中而不知見？...如來智慧在其身內, 與佛無異", see T.9, pp. 623c~624a.

gotra-vibhāga is usually viewed as the prototype of the tathāgatagarbha teaching. It can thus be infered that the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, which represents the scripture of the tathāgatagarbha tradition, defines tathāgatagarbha as tathāgata-wisdom.

However, there is an interesting situation that appears in Buddhabhadra's version of the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra.* There we find the following narration:

> "彼如來藏 (that *tathāgatagarbha*), 清涼無熱 (clear cool without fever), 大智慧 (great wisdom) 聚 (gathering), 妙寂泥洹 (subtle, calm *nirvāṇa*)."[197]

Were one to interpret this narration according to the grammatical usage of the classical Chinese, it can be understood as follows:

> "Tathāgatagarbha, clear and cool without fever, is an aggregation of great wisdom, and the subtle, calm nirvāṇa."

Accordingly, the tathāgatagarbha found in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* does not stick only to the basic definition of the "realizing wisdom" but also extends its meaning to the "realized realm of nirvāṇa."

But an alternative interpretation can be found in Amoghavajra's version which will be presented first in Chinese, then an explanation in English, and finally a possible English translation.

> 彼欲、瞋、癡、無明煩惱藏中有如來藏性(*tathāgatagarbha-dhātu*), 以此名爲**有性**, 若能止息, 名爲清涼, 則名涅槃 (*nirvāṇa*). 若能淨除無明煩惱, 是有情界, 是則名爲大智(great wisdom)聚體, 彼之有情, 名大智聚.[198]

An ambiguity found in this paragraph is the term 有性 (*bhāvatā*). A reasonable assumption is that the Chinese character 性 is a miscopy of 情, which resembles 性 in shape. This assumption is supported by the Tibetan version wherein the corresponding word is "sems

[197] See T.16, p.458c.
[198] See T.16, p.463a.

can."[199] Given that 性 originally was 情 the term 有性 should be corrected 有情. On the basis of this assumption, the paragraph can be translated:

> Inside those [who have the] matrix of the afflictions (煩惱藏) of desire, hatred, and ignorance exists the tathāgatagarbha-dhātu; for this reason they are named sentient beings (有情). When [the matrix of the afflictions of desire, hatred, and ignorance] subsides, it is named "clear and cool" and also named "nirvāṇa." When [one] is able to clear and remove the affliction of ignorance, the nature (界 /*dhātu*) of [such a] sentient being is named the "aggregate-substance (聚體) of great wisdom (大智)." That sentient being is named the "aggregate of great wisdom."

On the basis of Amoghavajra's version, an alternative interpretation of Buddhabhadra's version may be as follows:

> The tathāgatagarbha (彼如來藏) is covered by various afflictions. Once the afflictions subside, it is the realm of subtle and tranquil nirvāṇa (妙寂泥洹), which is clear and cool without fever (清涼無熱). Those sentient beings who have been freed from the afflictions are aggregates of great wisdom (大智慧聚).

Therefore, although nirvāṇa is the realm wherein afflictions have subsided, the substance or tathāgatagarbha of sentient beings whose afflictions have been eliminated is ultimately the aggregate of great wisdom.

In conclusion, tathāgatagrabha found in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* is none other than tathāgata-wisdom, and this is the reason that tathāgatagarbha is also named as the

[199] Takasaki, Jikido indicates in *The Formation of the Tathāgatagarbha Thought* that Amoghavajra deliberately translated this term as "有性", i.e. sat-tva, so as to imply the similarity between sattva and bodhisattva. See details on p.63. This is a very inspiring assumption. However, the term "有情" does not appear like an intentional translation, but more like an incidental miscopy due to similar configuration of characters, which is constantly found in ancient books. The reason is that, first, in the section following this paragraph there appears the term "有情", which has been habitually used by the translator Amoghavajra. Second, the Chinese term 有性 is generally the translation of astitva, astitā, bhāva, sat, sattā, sad-bhāva etc., but not sattva.

treasure of wisdom (智寶藏)[200] or the treasure of great wisdom (大智藏)[201] in this sutra.

Ⅱ. "Tathāgata-Śūnyatā-Wisdom" and "Tathāgata-Realm" in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*

The *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* as an early text of the tathāgatagarbha tradition explicitly defines tathāgatagarbha as tathāgata-wisdom. The *Śrīmālādevīsūtra,* representing the middle stage of the tathāgatagarbha tradition, although deducing the nature of tathāgatagarbha from different angles and thus extending the meaning of tathāgatagarbha, explicitly defines tathāgatagarbha as "tathāgata-śunyatā-wisdom," thus takes it as the basic significance of the tathāgatagarbha.

> The tathāgatagarbha is the wisdom of tathāgata-śunyatā. The tathāgatagarbha is yet to be seen and acquired by all the śrāvakas and the pratyeka-buddhas. It is known and realized only by Buddhas.[202]

The tathāgata-wisdom explained in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* is further articulated in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* as wisdom of tathāgata-śunyatā, which is exclusively achieved by the tathāgatas and is beyond the reach of the śrāvakas and the pratyeka-buddhas. However, the term "śunyatā" of the so-called "śunyatā-wisdom" is very different from "svabhāva-śunyatā" explained in the *Prajñāpāramitāsūtras* and their relevant commentaries, which insist on the insubstantial nature of all dharmas, whether conditioned or unconditioned. This śunyatā is a conditional śunyatā claiming that whereas the conditioned and temporary dharmas are śunya, the unconditioned and perpetual dharmas are not śunya. The

200 The sutra (Buddhabhadra's version) reads: "The great treasure is inside the body, it is ever-abiding and changeless. Having observed thus, (the tathāgata) for the sake of sentient beings expounds [the doctrine] to make them obtain the treasure of wisdom, [and therefore enjoy] abundant wealth and extensive advantages". (大寶在身內, 常在不變易. 如是觀察已, 而爲眾生說, 令得智寶藏, 大富兼廣利.) See T.16, p.458b.

201 The sutra (Amoghavajra"s version) reads: "You all wear this great treasure of wisdom, so as to escape poverty and become Buddhas". (汝等穿斯大智藏, 獲得離貧作世尊), See T.16, p.463a.

202 "如來藏者, 即是如來空性之智. 如來藏者, 一切聲聞獨覺所未曾見, 亦未曾得, 唯佛了知及能作證". See T.11, 677a.

Śrīmālādevīsūtra explains:

> The wisdom of tathāgata-śunyatā is of two kinds. Which are the two? [The first] named śunya-tathāgatagarbha is free from the wisdom not oriented to liberation [but] freed from all afflictions. [The second] aśunya-tathāgatagarbha is the wisdom oriented to liberation of innumerable Buddhas and of inconceivable Dharmas.[203]

The tathāgata-śunyatā-wisdom refers to two kinds of mental states or two kinds of wisdom directed to liberation. The śunya-tathāgatagarbha, when understood from the perspective of practice, refers to the mental state that has eliminated and discarded all afflictions. This mental state is not different from the process of practice. The aśunya-tathāgatagarbha is the inherent liberation wisdom and the inconceivable Buddha Dharmas. This mental state is innate by nature and is not acquired by means of practice. In other words, the śunya and aśunya of the tathāgata-śunyatā-wisdom respectively indicate a state in which afflictions have been eliminated and the innate state of the Buddha wisdom. The śunya-tathāgatagarbha alludes to the gradation of practice. It is the practice of eliminating adventitious defilements and the śunyatā-wisdom directed to liberation. On the other hand, the aśunya-tathāgatagarbha refers to the pure substance of the Buddha Dharma. It refers to the status of the originally existing inconceivable Dharmas, and also to śunyatā-wisdom that is essentially free of defilements.

Furthermore, the "śunya-tathāgatagarbha" and the "aśunya-tathāgatagarbha" of the tathāgata-śunyatā-wisdom, when interpreted in light of the Chinese versions, can be understood from another point of view. That is, what is śunya is temporary and unreal, while what is aśunya is permanent and substantial. Accordingly, śunya-tathāgatagarbha is

[203]如來藏空性之智復有二種, 何等爲二? 謂空如來藏, 所謂離於不解脫智、一切煩惱; 不空如來藏, 具過恆沙河佛解脫智、不思議法". 勝鬘夫人會, See T.11, p.677a.

śunyatā-wisdom by which one realizes that all afflictions are temporary and unreal; aśunya-tathāgatagarbha is śunyatā-wisdom by which one realizes that tathāgata-wisdom or the Buddha Dharma is permanent and substantial.

Finally, whichever of "śunya" or "aśūnya" is grasped, "śunya-tathāgatagarbha" and "aśunya-tathāgatagarbha as they occur in the *Śrīmālādevisūtra* are both tathāgata-śunyatā-wisdom. Among these two types of tathāgata-śunyatā-wisdom the latter, the aśunya-tathāgatagarbha, is obviously more essential and dominant because the non-empty Buddha-wisdom oriented to liberation is the Dharma-substance that exists primordially and that is fundamentally authentic.[204]

"Śunya-tathāgatagarbha" and "aśunya-tathāgatagarbha" are frequently cited and encountered in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra.* Together "śunya-tathāgatagarbha" and "aśunya-tathāgatagarbha" comprise tathāgatagarbha, or the tathāgata-śunyatā-wisdom. From the perspective of having "realizing-wisdom" as the basic contents of the tathāgatagarbha, the *Śrīmālādevisūtra* continues the doctrine established in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra.* However, the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* goes a step further in that it expands the definition of the tathāgatagarbha. The sutra states:

> Noble meaning (*ārya-satya*) explains the most profound meaning, subtle and difficult to know. It is not the referent (*viṣaya*) of dialectic thinking. It is what is to be known by the wise, but it is beyond the belief of all mundane [minds]. Why so? This [noble meaning] explains the deep and profound tathāgatagarbha. The

[204] The *Anūnatvāpūrṇatva-nirdeśa-parivarta-sūtra*, composed approximately at the same time as the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, contains ideas similar to "śunya-tathāgatagarbha" and "aśunya-tathāgatagarbha". The counterpart of aśunya-tathāgatagarbha is named "the substance originally corresponding to tathāgatagarbha and all the pure Dharmas" (如來藏本際相應體及清淨法), which is further explained: "this dharma is just-as-it-is, is not illusionary, is neither away nor departed from pure wisdom, is the pure Dharma-dhātu of tathatā, [and] is the inconceivable Dharma coming from beginningless time and possessing Dharma substance that corresponds to peace and purity". (此法如實、不虛妄, 不離、不脫智慧清淨真如法界不思議法. 無始本際來, 有此清淨相應法體) See details in T.16, p.467b~c.

> tathāgatagarbha is the tathāgata's referent. It is not to be known by all the śrāvakas and the pratyeka-buddhas.[205]

In this paragraph, tathāgatagarbha is regarded as the most profound tenet, the noble meaning or the ultimate truth. Specifically speaking, tathāgatagarbha refers to the realm realized by the tathāgatas.

In addition to the statement that "tathāgatagarbha is the tathāgata-śūnyatā-wisdom," the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*'s claim that "tathāgatagarbha is the tathāgata's referent" expands the range of the definition of the word "tathāgatagarbha" in comparison to the earlier *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra.* From "the realizing-wisdom of the tathāgata" to "the realized-realm of the tathāgata," the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* endows tathāgatagarbha with these two new perspectives and thus extends the meaning to those perspectives not yet found in the earlier texts of the tathāgatagarbha tradition.

In spite of the fact that the definition "tathāgata's realm" or "tathāgata's referent" is not as dominant as that of the "tathāgata-śūnyatā-wisdom," the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra* can be understood as a text that represents a transitional stage in the focus from the "realizing-wisdom" to the "realized realm or referent."

2) Contents of the term "Parinispanasvabhāva"

The term "parinispanasvabhāva" refers to one of the threefold svabhāva of the Yogācāra school. It has more or less different definitions, and the range of its meaning is expanded or contracted to some extant in various texts. Therefore, it is necessary to

205 "聖諦者, 說甚深義, 微細難知, 非思量境界, 是智者所知, 一切世間所不能信. 何以故? 此說甚深如來之藏. 如來藏者, 是如來境界, 非一切聲聞緣覺所知". See 勝鬘師子吼一乘大方便方廣經, T.12, p.221b. This paragraph of the *Śrīmālādevisūtra* is later cited in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra.* According to the Sanskrit version of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* the Sanskrit original of the tathāgata's "realm" here should be the tathāgata's "viṣaya", which has been translated into English as "domain" by Alex Wayman in *The Lion's Roar of Queen Śrīmālā*, p.96, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1990.

examine the definition of the parinișpanasvabhāva found in Yogācāra texts antecedent to or contemporary with the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, because only antecedent or texts contemporary with the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* can possibly have inspired or influenced the perspective the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* has in its interpretation of the term "parinișpanasvabhāva."

Yogācāra texts antecedent to the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* are the *Saṁdhinirmocanasūtra* and the *Yogācārya-bhūmi-śāstra* and should therefore be taken into consideration. These texts are considered the earliest texts of the Yogācāra School.

The five dharma (*pañca-dharma*)[206] theory found in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* is less developed in the *Saṁdhinirmocanasūtra*. It is evident that the terminology of pañca-dharma (or *pañca-vastu*) has not yet been established. Of the five, only three – nimitta, nāman, and vikalpa – are presented, and tathatā and samyag-jñāna are missing. This indicates that the theory of five dharma was not yet completed when the Yogācāra School began.[207] Consequently, it is safe to infer that the *Saṁdhinirmocanasūtra* and the *Yogācārya-bhūmi-śāstra* must have been earlier than the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*.[208]

As for Yogācāra texts composed approximately at the same time as the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, there is the *Mahāyāna-saṁgraha-śāstra* of Asaṅga.

The historical sequence of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* and the Yogācāra masters Asaṅga and Vasubandhu is frequently debated among scholars. Among the arguments of those who claim that Asaṅga and Vasubandhu are earlier than the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, the most persuasive is the claim that among the many commentaries composed by these two masters,

206 The five are: *nimitta, nāma, vikalpa, tathatā and samyag-jñāna.*

207 See the details in Funahashi, Naoya 舟橋尚哉: *On the Five Dharmas and Three Natures* (五法と三性について) in *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies* (印度学佛教学研究) 21-1, 1972

208 It is argued, however, by Tan, Xi-yong 談錫永 that the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* is earlier than the *Saṁdhinirmocanasūtra* and the great Yogācāra masters Asaṅga and Vasubandhu. For details, see Tan, Xi-yong and Shao, Song-xiong 邵頌雄: *Essays on the Tathāgatagarbha* (如來藏論集), p.89, Taipei: Comprehensive Buddha Culture 全佛文化, 2006. Further evidence is not provided to support this argument.

there are almost no texts in which citations of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* can be found. For those who argue the opposite, the most important argument is that the *Vyākhyā-yukti* of Vasubandhu does not mention even the title of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, but does quote nine verses (*gāthā*) from the Xth Chapter, *Sagāthākam* of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra.*[209]

Regarding the historical sequence of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* and the Yogācara masters, Asaṅga and Vasubandhu, it does not seem possible to reach a conclusion at this time. What can be known is that no matter which may have come earlier, there could not have been much difference between the times of both. Therefore, even if the *Mahāyāna-saṁgraha-śāstra* of Asaṅga is slightly later than the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, it is still probable that both texts grasped and explained pariniṣpanasvabhāva in the same academic context.

I. Tathatā in the *Saṁdhinirmocanasūtra* and the *Yogācāryabhūmiśāstra*

The *Saṁdhinirmocanasūtra* and the *Yogācārya-bhūmi-śāstra*, two early texts of the Yogācāra School, regard tathatā as being the specific contents of the pariniṣpanasvabhāva. The *Saṁdhinirmocanasutra* defines the term "pariniṣpanasvabhāva" as follows:

> What is the defining-characteristic of the pariniṣpanasvabhāva of all dharmas? It is the tathatā of the equality of all dharmas. All bodhisattvas are attentive with regard to this tathatā [and] are able to reach [their] goal because [they] make improving and advancing diligently the condition and because [they make] contemplating reasonably without confusion of the condition. [The bodhisattvas] gradually cultivate [their practice towards] this goal until anuttara-samyak-saṁbodhi has been realized perfectly.[210]

[209] For details, see Naoya Funahashi (舟橋尙哉), "The Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra and the Time of Vasubandhu" (世親と楞伽経との前後論について) in *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies* (印度学佛教学研究) 20-1, 1971, pp 321-326. For Xth Chapter, see Nanjio, p. 264-376.

[210] This is from Xuan-zang's (玄奘) translation *Jie-Shen-Mi-Jing* (解深密經): "云何諸法圓成實相？謂一切法平等真如. 於此真如, 諸菩薩衆勇猛精進爲因緣故, 如理作意無倒思惟爲因緣故, 乃能通達, 於此通

Similarly, the *Yogācārya-bhūmi-śāstra* defines parinispanasvabhāva:

> What is the parinispanasvabhāva? It is the tathatā of all dharma, the path of the noble wisdom, the realm of the noble wisdom, the referent of the noble wisdom.[211]

On the basis of the above two citations, it can be concluded that during the initial stage when the doctrine of the threefold svabhāva was established, the term "parinispanasvabhāva" was contextually linked to the term "tathatā," whereby the sense of "ultimate truth" can be inferred. That is, all dharmas in their very prime state are essentially equal and not yet grasped, defined or distorted by any conceptual or linguistic activities. This tathatā is the truth REALM understood and practiced in noble wisdom, and also the perfect REALM realized by the bodhisattvas through diligent cultivation and reasonable contemplation. Briefly, parinispanasvabhāva, according to the *Saṁdhinirmocanasūtra* and the *Yogācārya-bhūmi-śāstra*, is tathatā, which assumes the equal realm of the ultimate truth.

The relationship between parinispanasvabhāva and tathatā can also be investigated by looking into the defining-characteristics of the threefold svabhāva (*tri-svabhāva*) and the five dharma (*pañca-dharma*). The five dharma according to the Yogācāra School are also named the five foundations (*pañca-vastu*), and this explains a twofold categorization of the five foundations as flawed or flawless. The five dharmas had not yet been formed in the *Saṁdhinirmocanasūtra*, and it is not until the *Yogācārya-bhūmi-śāstra* that the five are developed into a systematic theory. The śāstra reads:

達漸漸修集(習), 乃至無上正等菩提, 方證圓滿". See T.16, p.693a In Bodhiruci's translation, the *Shen-Mi-Jie-Tuo-Jing* (深密解脫經): "the characteristic of parinispanasvabhāva"(圓成實相) is explained as "the characteristic of paramārtha" (第一義相), and is defined "the substance of the tathatā of all dharmas" (諸法真如之體). See T.16, p.669c.

[211] "云何圓成實性? 謂諸法真如, 聖智所行, 聖智境界, 聖智所緣". See T.30, p.703b.

> Which are the five foundations? The first is referent (*nimitta*), the second is name (*nāma*), the third is discrimination (*vikalpa*), the fourth is suchness (*tathatā*), the fifth is proper knowing (*samyag-jñāna*). To what does "referent" refer? In brief, it refers to all things inferred by words. To what does name refer? It refers to secular words implicit in the referent. To what does discrimination refer? It refers to mind and mental events (*citta-caitta*) operative in the three world systems (*traidhātuka*). To what does suchness refer? It refers to what becomes manifest as dharmanairātmya realized by noble wisdom, but it is not anything inferred by words. To what does proper knowing refer? In summary, there are two kinds. First is proper knowing of only the supramundane; second is proper knowing of the mundane and the supramundane.[212]

The definitions of the five dharmas given here in the *Yogācārya-bhūmi-śāstra* basically are followed in later texts without much discrepancy. Among these five dharmas, the first three are flawed dharms while the last two are flawless dharmas. From the perspective of the flawed dharmas, "nimitta" (referent) refers to things indicated by worldly languages, "nāman" (name) refers to worldly languages used to indicate things, "vikalpa" (discrimination) refers to mental activities of thinking and feeling, and so on. From the perspective of the flawless dharmas, "tathatā" (suchness) refers to the transcendental realm manifested in the realization of dharmanairātmya grasped and obtained by noble knowledge, but it does not refer to phenomena within the reach of, or explainable through, language. Samyag-jñāna (proper knowing), on the other hand, refers to knowing properly by which worldly and mundane obstacles are removed and the ultimate realm of tathatā is realized or attained.

With the above discussion as our background, we can compare the definitions of

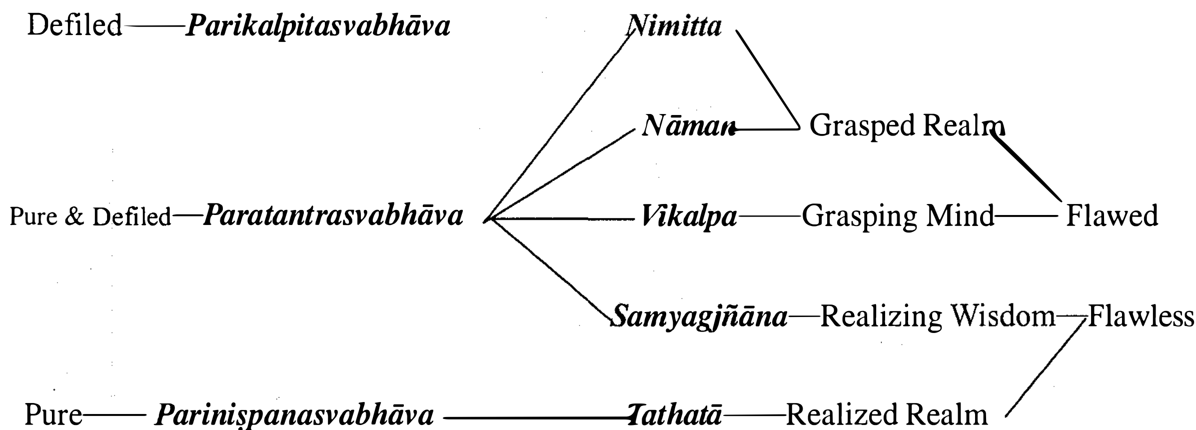
[212]云何五事? 一相, 二名, 三分別, 四真如, 五正智. 何等爲相? 謂若略說所有言談安足處事. 何等爲名?謂即於相所有增語. 何等爲分別? 謂三界行中所有心心所. 何等爲真如? 謂法無我所顯, 聖智所行, 非一切言談安足處事. 何等爲正智? 謂略有二種: 一唯出世間正智, 二世間出世間正智. See 瑜伽師地論 T.30, p.696a.

"tathatā" and "parinişpannasvabhāva established in the *Yogācārya-bhūmi-śāstra.* Tathatā is "what becomes manifest as dharmanairātmya realized by noble wisdom," while "parinişpanasvabhāva" is "... tathatā of all dharmas, the path of noble wisdom, the realm of noble wisdom, [and] the referent of the noble wisdom." Thus, it can be seen that according to the *Yogācārya-bhūmi-śāstra*, "parinişpanasvabhāva" of the threefold svabhāva corresponds exactly to "tathatā" of the five dharmas, namely, the realm realized by the noble wisdom. The *śāstra* states:

> Question: In the correspondence of the threefold svabhāva to five dharmas, to how many of the five dharmas does the first svabhāva match? Answer: There is none. Question: To how many does the second svabhāva match? Answer: Four match. Question: To how many does the third svabhāva match? Answer: One matches.[213]

This dialogue is too sketchy to be clear but it can be inferred that by "the third svabhāva," parinişpanasvabhāva is meant and that the "one dharma" that matches is tathatā. The diagram below shows the relationship between both as suggested in the *Yogācārya-bhūmi-śāstra.*

[213]"問: 三種自性相等五法, 初自性, 五法中幾所攝? 答: 都非所攝. 問: 第二自性幾所攝? 答: 四所攝. 問: 第三自性幾所攝? 答: 一所攝". See 瑜伽師地論, T.30, p.704c. There are further comments as follows: "Question: If paratantrasvabhāva also matches samyag-jñāna, why is it stated previously, "grasping of the parikalpitasvabhāva is caused by the paratantrasvabhāva' [and] how can that be undersstood? Answer: That context mentions only the defiled part of the paratantrasvabhāva and not its pure part. It should be understood that regarding the pure part, there is no grasping caused by that". (問: 若依他起自性亦正智所攝, 何故前說'依他起自性緣遍計所執自性執，應可了知?'答: 彼意唯說依他起自性雜染分, 非清淨分. 若清淨分, 當知緣彼無執, 應可了知.)



According to the *Yogācārya-bhūmi-śāstra*, which represents the early stage of the Yogācāra School, samyag-jñāna and tathatā are both classified as flawless dharmas within which the latter corresponds to the pure part of the paratantrasvabhāva; only tathatā, the truth realm of suchness, corresponds to the pariniṣpanasvabhāva. Therefore, although from the ultimate point of view "realizing wisdom" and "realized realm" should not fall into the opposition of dualism but ought to follow the principle of "non-duality of realm and wisdom,"[214] from a practical point of view, the earlier definition of "pariniṣpanasvabhāva" as found in the earlier Yogācāra texts is not related to the "realizing wisdom" of samyag-jñāna but to the "realized realm" of tathatā.[215] That "pariniṣpanasvabhāva" includes

[214] To cite just one example, the *Commentary on the Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* (大般涅槃經疏) states: "In the way of the conventional truth exists the two of realm and wisdom. Once the non-arising is manifested the distinction between realm and wisdom is vanished...the ordinary person distinguishes so as to see the two of realm and wisdom; the wise man renounces realm and wisdom, to whom all is the truth of oneness, so it is said the oneness of the wise". (世諦道中有境智二, 若見無生, 則不見有境智之別...凡夫分別, 故見有境智之二; 聖忘境智, 皆是一真, 故言聖一.) See T.38, p.221a.

[215] It is indicated by Suguro, Shinzyou 勝呂信靜 that in the initial stage of the Yogācāra School, that is to say the stage of the *Saṁdhinirmocanasūtra*, the doctrine of the threefold svabhāva is the theory on existence but not a theory of epistemology dealing with the subjective activities of mentality. Specifically, the parikalpitasvabhāva suggests the objects bearing the nature of being recognized and distinguished, namely the objectified phenomena; the paratantrasvabhāva is the defiled dharmas established by the principle of the twelve co-depedent origination, which is the objective dharmas instead of the subjective consciousness; the pariniṣpanasvabhāva signifies the tathatā, which is again the objective presentation but not the subjective

subjective wisdom is a doctrinal development found in the later texts. However, in so far as the *Saṁdhinirmocanasūtra* and the *Yogācārya-bhūmi-śāstra* are of concern, it can be known that "pariniṣpanasvabhāva" in the primary stage of the Yogācāra School simply indicates the pure and flawless realm of the ultimate truth.

Ⅱ. All the Pure Dharmas in the *Mahāyānasaṁgrahaśāstra*

The Yogācāra School from its inception was marked by the teaching of Maitreya, who is said to have placed importance on the view and practice of Yoga. From Maiteya down to Asaṅga and Vasubandhu, it is well known that Yogācāra philosophy manifested remarkable achievements. Especially in the *Mahāyānasaṁgrahaśāstra* of Asaṅga we find a systematically constructed, comprehensive, and mature theory of the Yogācāra at a time slightly earlier than the composition of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra.* Even if the *Mahāyānasaṁgrahaśāstra* were later than the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, the difference probably would be insignificant. Pariniṣpanasvabhāva defined simply as tathatā in the earlier texts saw an expansion in its definition in the *Mahāyānasaṁgrahaśāstra.* The text states:

> How should the pariniṣpanasvabhāva be understood? It should be understood through the explanation of the four pure dharmas. Which are the so named four pure dharmas? The first, the naturally pure, that is to say, tathatā, śūnyatā, bhūtakoṭi, animitta, paramārtha, [and] dharma-dhātu. The second, pure in view of being freed from defilements, that is to say, [naturally pure by virtue of] the elimination of all obstacles and defilements. The third, the purity of the path by which one attains [tathatā etc.], that is to say, all the bodhipakṣa-dharma, pāramitā, and so on. The fourth, the purity of the referent that brings about [the path], that is to say, [the purity of] the subtle and right Dharma teachings of the

intelligence. See the details in "The Establishment of the System of the Yogācāra Teaching——Especially centered on the Mahāyāna-saṁgraha-śāstra" (唯識説の体系の成立——とくに『攝大乘論』中心にして) ,in *The Yogācāra Thinking* (唯識思想), Tokyo: Shunjusha, 1st print of new edition, 2001.

> Mahāyāna. The reason is that because this teaching is the pure cause for producing the pure, it is not parikalpitasvabhāva. Because it flows forth (*niṣyanda*) from the pure dharma-dhātu, it is not paratantrasvabhāva. Those four dharmas exhaust all pure dharmas.[216]

Accordingly, the *Mahāyānasaṁgrahaśāstra*, in defining "pariniṣpanna-svabhāva," is so comprehensive that it includes all pure dharmas. In contrast, the *Saṁdhinirmocanasūtra* and the *Yogācārya-bhūmi-śāstra* simply give tathatā that is listed as the first category of pure dharma, i.e. the naturally pure.

The first and second categories of pure dharma are not essentially different; they both signify the true nature or empty nature of all dharmas, viz. the ultimate realm realized by noble wisdom. Therefore, "pure by nature" and "pure in being freed from defilements" share the same purity of the same intrinsic quality. The difference lies in their characteristics in that the former suggests the practice stage of the sentient beings while the latter suggests the perfected stage of the sages. The third category, "purity of the path by which one attains [tathatā etc.]," extensively indicates all paths of practice. The fourth category, "the purity of the referent that brings about [the path]," extensively indicates the Dharmas preached by the Mahāyāna. Thus, according to the *Mahāyānasaṁgrahaśāstra*, "pariniṣpanasvabhāva" does not merely mean the ultimate realm of truth beyond the reach of languages, but also comprises all practices leading to this realm as well as all Mahāyāna teachings that reveal this realm.

In conclusion, the definition of pariniṣpanasvabhāva has undergone a process of

[216] 云何應知圓成實自性? 應知宣說四清淨法. 何等名爲四清淨法? 一者, 自性清淨, 謂真如、空、實際、無相、勝義、法界. 二者, 離垢清淨, 謂即此離一切障垢. 三者, 得此道清淨, 謂一切菩提分法, 波羅密多等. 四者, 生此境清淨, 謂諸大乘妙正法教, 由此法教, 清淨緣故, 非遍計所執自性；最清淨法界等流性故, 非依他起自性. 如是四法，總攝一切清淨法盡. This is the version translated by Xuan-zang, see 攝大乘論釋, T.31, p.140b.

expansion. In the initial stage of the Yogācāra School, the *Saṁdhinirmocanasūtra* and the *Yogācārya-bhūmi-śāstra* simply and precisely defined "parinişpanasvabhāva" as the "realm of tathatā." Down to the *Mahāyānasaṁgrahaśāstra* of Asaṅga, despite the fact that parinişpanasvabhāva was still focused on the "naturally pure" in order to focus on the ultimately true nature of all dharmas, with the arrival of Asaṅga and Vasubandhu, factors such as the measures of practice and the teachings of the Mahāyāna came into play and were incorporated into the scope of the "parinişpanasvabhāva." Therefore, parinişpanasvabhāva does not refer only to the ultimate truth and the realized realm that are flawless and un-conditioned, but also to the practice necessary for separating one from defilements and the wisdom realizing the realm, which are flawless but conditioned. The *Mahāyānasaṁgrahaśāstra* and other Yogācāra texts that followed tend to broaden the scope of the parinişpanasvabhāva, and since this is a developing tendency of the Yogācāra tradition, it can be reasonably assumed that the same stream had an influence on the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra.*

3) Parinişpanasvabhāvastathāgatagarbhahṛdaya in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*

As stated above, the implication of the tathāgatagarbha gradually moved from the "wisdom" of the tathāgata to the "realm" realized by the tathāgata. In distinction, the contents of parinişpanasvabhāva became extended from the "realm" of the tathatā to "practice" and "wisdom" directed towards this realm. The table below briefly shows this inclination.

	Tathāgatagarbha	Parinispanasvabhāva
Initial Definition and Relevant Text	"Wisdom" of the Tathāgata ——*Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*	"Realm" of the Tathatā ——*Saṁdhinirmocanasūtra* and *Yogācārya-bhūmi-śāstra*
Later Definition and Relevant Text	"Tathāgata-Śūnyatā-Wisdom" and the "Tathāgata-Realm" ——*Śrīmālādevisūtra*	All the Pure Dharmas ——*Mahāyānasaṁgrahaśāstra*
Developing Tendency	Extended from "Wisdom" to "Realm"	Extended from "Realm" to Dharma Teachings and Practice

Inheriting two Mahāyana streams of the tathāgatagarbha tradition and the Yogācāra School, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* delicately integrates the terminologies of "tathāgatagarbha" and "parinispanasvabhāva" and coins the compounded term "parinispanasvabhāva-tathāgatagarbha." In order to analyze how parinispanasvabhāva was influenced by the thought of tathatā and broadened its meaning to include tathāgatagarbha as tathāgata-wisdom, it is necessary to pay a close attention to the contents of the following quotations from the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra.*

1. What is the parinispannasvabhāva? It is the separation from the discriminating imagination about appearance, name, object, and characteristic; it is the tathatā realized by noble wisdom, the realm reached and realized by self-realizing noble wisdom. Mahāmati, this parinispannasvabhāva is the essence of the tathāgatagarbha.[217]

[217] parinispannasvabhāvaḥ katamaḥ? Yaduta nimitta-nāma-vastu-lakṣana-vikalpa-virahitaṁ tathatāryajñāna-gatigamana-pratyātmāryajñāna-gati-gocaraḥ. eṣa mahāmate parinispannasvabhāvas tathāgatagarbha-hṛdayam. (Sanskrit version) in the Nanjio edition of *The Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*, pp.67~68. The English translation by D.T. Suzuki reads: "What is perfect knowledge? It is realized when one casts aside the discriminating notions of form, name, reality, and character; it is the inner realization by noble wisdom. This perfect knowledge, Mahāmati, is the essence of the Tathāgata-garbha". See *The Lankavatara Sutra—A Mahayana Text*, Taipei: SMC Publishing Inc. 1991, p.60.

2. What is the nature of accomplishment? It is to be freed from erroneous ideas about name, appearance, object, and characteristic; it is the realm obtained by noble wisdom and reached by self-realizing noble wisdom. This is named the nature of accomplishment, which is the essence of the tathāgatagarbha. (Song Version)[218]

3. What is the characteristic of the dharma substance of the ultimate truth? It is the separation from the characteristic of name, the characteristic of fundamentals, [and] the characteristic of object; it is the realm practiced and reached by the sage. Mahāmati! This is named the characteristic of the ultimate truth, which is the essence of the the tathāgatagarbha of Buddhas. (Wei Version)[219]

4. What is the nature of perfect accomplishment? It is to be separated from all the discriminations regarding name, referent, object, and characteristic; it is suchness reached by the self-realizing noble wisdom. Mahāmati! This is the nature of perfect accomplishment, which is the essence of the tathāgatagarbha. (Tang Version)[220]

Among the three Chinese versions, the Wei version is apparently more or less at variance with the rest. The translator Bodhiruci tends to translate pariniṣpannasvabhāva as "the characteristic of the ultimate truth" or the "the characteristic of the ultimate truth of dharmas,"[221] etc. Despite the difference in his rendering, the implication remains basically the same.

[218]云何成自性? 謂離名、相、事、相妄想, 聖智所得及自覺聖智趣所行境界, 是名成自性如來藏心. (Song version)in *Leng-Qie-A-Ba-Duo-Luo-Bao-Jing* 楞伽阿跋多羅寶經,, see T.16, p.487c.

[219]何者第一義諦法體相? 謂諸佛如來離名字相、境界相、事相相, 聖者修行境界行處. 大慧! 是名第一義諦相, 諸佛如來藏心.(Wei version)in *Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing* 入楞伽經, see T.16, p.527c.

[220]何者圓成自性? 謂離名、相、事、相、一切分別, 自證聖智所行真如. 大慧! 此是圓成自性如來藏心. (Tang version) in *Da-Sheng-Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing* 大乘入楞伽經, see T.16, p.598a.

[221] Such as seen in the *Shen-Mi-Jie-Tuo-Jing* 深密解脫經 translated by Bodhiruci.

The pronoun "*eṣa*" in the Sanskrit version, according to the understanding of all the three Chinese translations, refers to the previous sentence in which the realm of tathatā is described. An alternative interpretation adopted by Suzuki is to understand it as an article modifying the pariniṣpannasvabhāva. In this case, "eṣa pariniṣpannasvabhāva-tathāgatagarbhahṛdayam" means "this pariniṣpannasvabhāva is the essence of the tathāgatagarbha." "Pariniṣpannasvabhāva that is the essence of the tathāgatagarbha" in the explanation given by the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* means "tathatā" reached by noble wisdom, and is therefore the realm realized by noble wisdom. Compared to the definitions found in the *Saṁdhinirmocanasūtra* and the *Yogācārya-bhūmi-śāstra*, the meaning of "pariniṣpannasvabhāva" as defined by the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* accords well with the definition found in the initial stage of the Yogācāra School. By combining pariniṣpannasvabhāva with tathāgatagarbha, the attribute of the former as the realized "realm" is naturally transferred to the latter. As a result, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra,* differing from the earlier scriptures of the tathāgatagarbha tradition that take the tathāgata-garbha as the tathāgata-wisdom, places more emphasis on the aspect of "realm" because pariniṣpannasvabhāva that is the essence of the tathāgatagarbha refers to the "realm of tathatā" realized by means of noble wisdom rather than to "noble wisdom" by which one realizes tathatā.

Some scholars regard the doctrine of threefold svabhāva in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* as an explanation of subjective mentality instead of objective existence. For example, D. T. Suzuki interprets them from an epistemological perspective and thus translates parikalpitasvabhāva as "false discrimination"; paratantrasvabhāva as "the knowledge of the

relativity-aspect;" and parinişpannasvabhāva as "perfect knowledge."[222] Brian Edward Brown, on the other hand, claims that the threefold svabhāva represent three kinds of understanding. He states:

> ... the text expresses itself more often through the idiom of epistemology than ontology. This is most apparent in the scripture's references to the three self-natures (*svabhāva*) ...

And with regard to parikalpitasvabhāva specifically, he goes on to say that it is "... the act of imagination" producing its own object; paratantrasvabhāva is "a mode of perception, a particular viewpoint" influenced and conditioned by parikalpitasvabhāva; and parinişpannasvabhāva is "perfect knowledge," which comprehends all things as Mind-only.[223]

The doctrine of the threefold svabhāva involves philosophical issues of epistemology and ontology. In other words, by means of "noble wisdom" one becomes capable of realizing ultimate existence, but false discrimination can fabricate only an illusionary object. The doctrine of the threefold svabhāva was posed originally to explain differing forms of existences but a particular form that existence takes is decided by a particular perceptional mode. In particular, practical practice does not rely on objective existence, but on the subjective function of cognition. Whether existence can be determined to be real or illusionary is decided by whether the mind is able to make a turn-about such that the conditioned consciousness transforms into noble wisdom. This means that the extension of the doctrine of threefold svabhāva from an ontological theory to an epistemological theory is a necessary tendency in order to match the demand of practice.

[222] See the details in D. T. Suzuki: *The Lankavatara Sutra—A Mahayana Text*, Taipei: SMC Publishing Inc. 1991, pp.59~61.

[223] See the details in Brian Edward Brown: *The Buddha Nature—A Study of the Tathāgatagarbha and Ālayavijñāna*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1994, pp.185~187.

Therefore, the most spectacular and practical aspect of the Yogācāra teaching is said to be epistemology.

However, to regard the threefold svabhāva in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* as a theory of cognition in order to emphasize the importance of the epistemological aspect departs from the original intention of the scripture. Because the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* defines "pariniṣpannasvabhāva" as "tathatā realized by noble wisdom." The focus is on the meaning of "realm" instead of "wisdom." Suzuki's translation of "pariniṣpannasvabhāva tathāgatagarbhahṛdayam" as "This perfect knowledge is the essence of the Tathāgata-garbha," although seemingly in accord with the earlier understanding of tathāgatagarbha, is in need of further deliberation because the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* is a relatively later text influenced by Yogācāra thought. Thus, "pariniṣpannasvabhāvatathāgatagarbha" found in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, implants the meaning of "tathatā" or "realm" unto tathāgatagarbha and so takes the definition of tathāgatagarbha one step further, shifting its definition from "realizing wisdom" to include "realized realm."

As stated above, the extension of the tathāgatagarbha from wisdom to realm was already implied in the *Śrīmālādevisūtra* that expounded the ideas that "tathāgatagarbha is the tathāgata-śūnyatā-wisdom" and that "tathāgatagarbha is the tathāgata's realm." Though the aspect of "tathāgata-śūnyatā-wisdom" has been expounded better in the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, it is the latter, viz. the "tathāgata's realm," that is cited and developed in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra.*

1. For Queen Śrīmālā to whom the Buddha's spiritual power was added, the [pure] realm of Tathagata-hood was expounded. This does not belong to the realm of speculation as it is carried on by the Śrāvakas, Pratyekabuddhas, and other philosophers, except, Mahāmati, that this realm of Tathagatahood which is the

realm of the Tathāgatagarbha-Ālayavijñāna is meant for those Bodhisattva-Mahāsattvas who like you are endowed with subtle, fine, penetrating thought-power and whose understanding is in accordance with the meaning. (Sanskrit version)[224]

2. Queen Śrīmālā, who is sustained by the power and spirit of the Buddha, expounded the realm of tathāgata but not the realm of śrāvakas, pratyeka-buddhas, and heretical philosophers. The tathāgatagarbha-ālayavijñāna is exclusively the wisdom realm of the Buddhas and other bodhisattvas with sharp wisdom and whose understanding is in accordance with the meaning. (Song version)[225]

3. It is said to Śrīmālā: "This tathāgatagarbha is the realm of tathāgata." Mahāmati! The realm of tathāgatagarbha-ālayavijñāna is the realm of ālayavijñāna. Now I and you with other bodhisattvas with very profound wisdom are capable of realizing these two kinds of dharmas. All others – śrāvakas, pratyeka-buddhas and heretical philosophers who are attached to names and words (名字) are not capable of understanding such twofold dharma. (Wei Version)[226]

4. For Queen Śrīmālā the realm of Buddha is expounded, but not the realm of heretical philosophers and two vehicles [of theśrāvakas and pratyeka-buddhas]. Mahāmati! This tathāgatagarbha-ālayavijñāna is the realm of Buddha, the domain of activity of you and others whose pure wisdom is [in accordance with] the meaning followed by the bodhisattvas . (Tang Version)[227]

[224] This is the translation of D. T. Suzuki. See *The Lankavatara Sutra—A Mahayana Text*, Taipei: SMC Publishing Inc. 1991, p.193. śrīmālāṁ devīṁ adhiṣṭhāya tathāgata-viṣayo deśito, na śrāvaka-pratyekabuddhānyatīrthakaratarkaviṣayo'nyatra. Mahāmate! Tathāgata-viṣaya eva tathāgatagarbha ālayavijñānaviṣayastvat sadṛśānāṁ ca sūkṣmanipuṇamatibuddhiprabhedakānāṁ bodhisattvānāṁ mahāsattvānām arthapratiśaraṇānāṁ. in the Nanjio edition of *The Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*, p.223.

[225] 勝鬘夫人承佛威神, 說如來境界, 非聲聞緣覺及外道境界 .如來藏藏識, 唯佛及餘利智依義菩薩智慧境界. (Song version)in *Leng-Qie-A-Ba-Duo-Luo-Bao-Jing* 楞伽阿跋多羅寶經,, see T.16, p.510c.

[226] 對勝鬘說言: 如來藏是如來境界. 大慧! 如來藏識阿梨耶識境界, 我今與汝及諸菩薩甚深智者, 能了分別此二種法, 諸餘聲聞、辟支佛及外道等執著名字者, 不能了知如此二法. (Wei version)in *Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing* 入楞伽經, see T.16, p.557a.

[227] 爲勝鬘夫人說佛境界, 非是外道二乘境界. 大慧! 此如來藏藏識是佛境界, 與汝等比淨智菩薩隨順義者所行之處. (Tang verison) in *Da-Sheng-Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing* 大乘入楞伽經, see T.16, p.620a.

Among the three Chinese versions the Wei version is slightly different in referring to the "two dharmas," which according to context might imply tathāgatagarbha and ālayavijñāna. Besides, in the Sung version Queen Śrīmālā, instead of the Buddha, is the expounder of the tathāgatagarbha. In any case, tathāgatagarbha is definitely the ultimate realm realized only by Buddha and bodhisattva. Although the quotations above are by no means isolated examples of the tathāgatagarbha teaching inherited by the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* from the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, this is the only place in which the name of Śrīmālā is mentioned.

The phrase "the realm of tathāgatagarbha-ālayavijñāna,"[228] in the Sanskrit original cited above refers to the "tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna-viṣaya" and also to "tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna-gocara" found elsewhere.[229] Both viṣaya and gocara signify the "object of knowledge," the "realm of wisdom" or the "scope of capability." The Tibetan renderings of viṣaya and gocara are "yul" and "spyod yul"[230] respectively. Their meanings are approximately the same. In the Chinese versions they are rendered together as "jing-jie" (境界). Whether it be "tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna-viṣaya" or "tathāgatagarbhālaya-vijñāna-gocara," the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* focuses on the "realm" aspect of tathāgatagarbha. In sum, the claim that "tathāgatagarbha is the realm of tathāgata" just as the statement "pariniṣpannasvabhāva is the essence of tathāgatagarbha" indicates that the essence of tathāgatagarbha and pariniṣpannasvabhāva is "tathatā," the perfect realm realized by the wisdom of tathāgata.

While pariniṣpannasvabhāva in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* is focused on tathatā, the

[228] The "tathāgatagarbhaālayavijñāna" in *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* is basically no different from the "tathāgatagarbha" in *Śrīmālādevisūtra*. The combination and identification of tathāgatagarbha and ālayavijñāna is an important characteristic feature in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*.

[229] For such examples, see for example, Nanjio edition of *The Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*, p.222, line 14~15.

[230] "de bzhin gshegs pa'i snying po kun gzhi rnam par shes pa'i **spyod yul**"is found in *Ḥphags-pa laṅ-kar gśegs-paḥi theg-pa chen-poḥi mdo*, Peking edition of *Tibetan Tripitaka* Vol. 29, p.65, leaf 157a, line 8; "de bzhin gshegs pa'i snying po kun gzhi rnam par shes pa'i **yul**"in p.65, leaf 157b, line 5

scope of parinișpannasvabhāva is not limited to that. As discussed above, that the contents of parinișpannasvabhāva extend from being centered on tathatā and extending to the edge of Buddha realm is an indicator of the developing tendency of the Yogācāra School. For example, we read the following in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*:

> Tathatā, śūnyatā, advayā, bhūtakoṭi, and dharma-dhātu are all indiscriminatively explained by me as parinișpanna.[231]

Consequently, the definition of "parinișpannasvabhāva" is not confined to "tathatā," but it also includes śūnyatā, advayā, bhūtakoṭI, and dharma-dhātu, terms which indicate the ultimate realm or transcendental truth. These are all listed in the first category of pure dharmas, i.e., the naturally pure, as classified in the *Mahāyānasaṁgrahaśāstra* in which parinișpannasvabhāva is defined as the four pure dharmas.

The text that influenced the definition of "Parinișpannasvabhāva" in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* was probably the *Mahāyānasaṁgrahaśāstra*, or it may have been the case that both were influenced by the one and same academic atmosphere. Perhaps the Chinese commentator Bao-chen (寶臣) was aware of this possibility and thus, in his work *Commentary on Da-Sheng-Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing*, he quoted from the *Mahāyānasaṁgraha-śāstra* when he explained the compound phrase "parinișpannasvabhāvatathāgatagarbha-hṛdayam."[232]

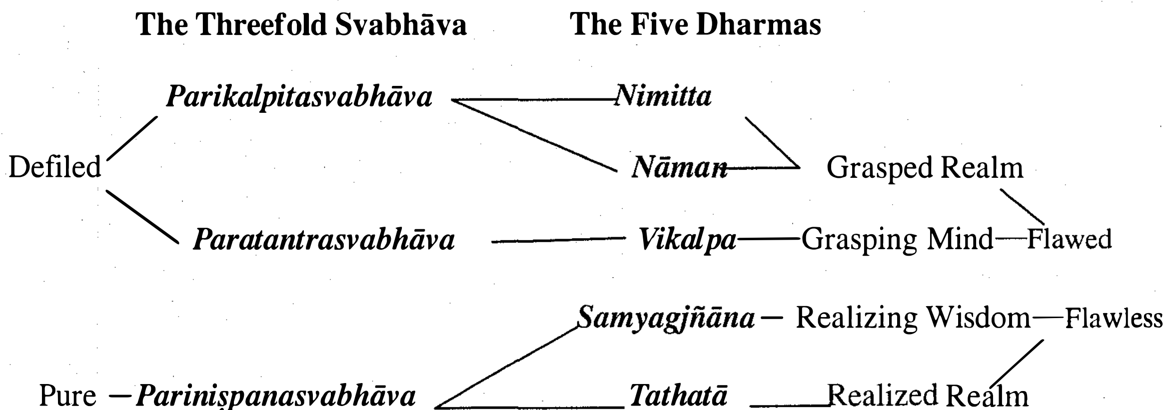
[231] "真如、空、不二、實際及法性, 皆無有分別, 我說是圓成". See *Da-Sheng-Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing* 大乘入楞伽經, T.16, p.628a. The Wei version reads 不二、真如、空、實際及法體, 我說無分別, 成就彼法相 see T.16, p.569b; "advayā, tathatā, śūnyatā, bhūtakoṭi and dharma-dhātu, I explain that the characteristic of those dharmas lies in the accomplishment of non-discrimnation.

[232] The commentary reads: "The tathatā realized by the self-realizing noble wisdom, is parinișpannasvabhāva, the real substance of Dharma-body, the nature of tathāgatagarbha, the true heart that is clear and pure ... hence the *Mahāyānasaṁgrahaśāstra* says: 'It should be understood that the parinișpanasvabhāva is none other than the four pure dharmas. First, the naturally pure, that is the tathatā, bhūtakoṭi, paramārtha, dharma-dhātu ....'" (自覺聖智所證如如, 此即圓成自性法身實體、如來藏性清淨真心也...故摩訶衍論云: '圓成實自性, 應知宣說四清淨法. 一, 自性清淨, 謂真如、實際、勝義、法界...') See the details in T.39, p.453c.

That parinișpannasvabhāva in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* originates from being awakened to the realm of tathatā can also be seen in the relationship between the threefold svabhāva and the five dharmas. The *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* states:

> Among them name (*nāman*) and referent (*nimitta*) are of the nature of imagination (*parikalpitasvabhāva* 妄計性); the other-dependent discrimination (*paratantra-vikalpa* 依彼分別) is the phenomenon of mind and mental events rising simultaneously, like sun and its sunlight; this is the other-dependent nature (*paratantrasvabhāva*). Because proper understanding (*samyagjñāna*) and suchness (*tathatā*) cannot be extinguished, this [state] is the perfected-nature (*parinișpannasvabhāva*).[233]

The relationship above can be understood by the following diagram:



By comparing this diagram of *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* with the previous one of *Yogācārya-bhūmi-śāstra* it can be seen that "parinișpannasvabhāva" in the

[233] "其中名及相是妄計性; 以依彼分別心心所法俱時而起, 如日與光, 是緣起性. 正智如如不可壞故, 是圓成性". See T.16, p.620b~c. The corresponding translation of Suzuki is somewhat different from the Chinese text above, but for comparison, it is given here: "of these, name and appearance are known as the Parikalpita [false imagination]. Then, Mahāmati, discrimination which rises depending upon them, is the notion of an ego-soul and what belongs to it -- the notion and the discrimination are of simultaneous occurrence, like the rising of the sun and its rays. Mahāmati, the discrimination thus supporting the notion of self-nature which subsists in the multiplicities of object, is called the Paratantra [dependence on another]. Right knowledge and suchness, Mahāmati, are indestructible, and thus they are known as Parinishpanna [perfect knowledge]". See *The Lankavatara Sutra—A Mahayana Text*, Taipei: SMC Publishing Inc. 1991, p.197.

Laṅkāvatārasūtra not only includes the realm of tathatā, but also comprises the wisdom of proper knowledge (*samyagjñāna*), which was previously classified as "paratantrasvabhāva." Just as "pariniṣpannasvabhāva" in the *Mahāyānasaṁgrahaśāstra* contains all the pure dharmas, "pariniṣpannasvabhāva" in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* contains "tathatā" and "samyagjñāna," both of which are pure and flawless. With the expansion of the range and meaning of "pariniṣpannasvabhāva" in the Yogācāra School, "pariniṣpannasvabhāva" in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* was influenced by this developing trend and thus took on the twofold meanings of realm and wisdom. Consequently, owing to the combination of and perhaps even because of the identification of "pariniṣpannasvabhāva" and "tathāgatagarbha," the meaning of the latter simultaneously took on the meanings of "the objective realm" and "the subjective wisdom."

4) Conclusion

The statement "pariniṣpannasvabhāvastathāgatagarbhahṛdayam" in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* reveals a doctrinal association between "pariniṣpannasvabhāva" and "tathāgatagarbha," and also exposes the Yogācāric influence upon the tathāgatagarbha thought. The influence of pariniṣpannasvabhāva upon tathāgatagarbha radiated in two directions – the spread in scope and a shift of emphasis.

Firstly, "pariniṣpannasvabhāva" originally was focused on "tathatā" and then spread its scope to include "all pure dharmas." To be more specific, the activity field of "pariniṣpannasvabhāva" extended from "the realized realm" to "the realizing wisdom." Once such an extension in scope made up of objective-existence and subjective-mentality had become identified with tathāgatagarbha, the latter inevitably had to break out of its earlier state of tathāgata-wisdom that constituted the subjective aspect and thereby broaden

its scope to include the aspects of "realizing-wisdom" and "realized-realm."

Secondly, even if the scope of tathāgatagarbha expanded to include "realizing-wisdom" and "realized-realm," it did not mean that "wisdom" and "realm" shared the doctrinal gravity on a fifty-fifty basis. Under the influence of parinişpannasvabhāva, the focus of tathāgatagarbha shifted from "tathāgata-wisdom" to the "realm of tathatā." Parinişpannasvabhāva in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* includes samyagjñāna and tathatā. A closer examination of the Yogācāra tradition indicates that parinişpannasvabhāva is focused on the tathatā in the final analysis. It is thus understandable that the statement "Tathatā is parinişpanna"[234] appears in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* instead of the statement "Samyagjñāna is parinişpanna." Moreover, the *Rāvaṇādhyeṣaṇā* Chapter, the first chapter in which the main ideas in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* are revealed, mentions "tathāgatagarbha-svapratyātmāryajñāna-gocara"[235] and thus implicates the concept of "realm" (*gocara*) to tathāgatagarbha. Thereafter in *Sarvadharmasamuccaya* Chapter, "parinişpannasvabhāva" is defined as tathatāryajñānagatigamanapratyātmāryajñānagatigocara, i.e., the realm of tathatā realized by noble wisdom or reached and realized by self-realizing noble wisdom. Therefore, the parinişpannasvabhāva as the essence of tathāgatagarbha is none other than the realm (*gocara*) of tathatā. Even if the sense of "realm" did not originate on the basis of Yogācāric influences,[236] that there had been a shift in the meaning of the tathāgatagarbha

[234] "真如是圓成", see *Da-Sheng-Ru-Leng-Qie-Jing 大乘入楞伽經*,, T.16, p.632b.

[235] See the Nanjio edition of *The Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*, p.21. The Sanskrit context to which this compound belongs is ambiguous. The Song translation lacks this part, the Wei (T.16, p.519a) and the Tang versions (T.16, p.590b) have some disagreements. This compound can be understood as a karma-dhāraya compound and it implies that the "tathāgatagarbha" is the "svapratyātmāryajñānagocara", or the realm realized by noble wisdom in the innermost self. The English translation of Suzuki is "the womb of Tathagatahood, which is the realm of noble wisdom realized in one's inmost self", see *The Lankavatara Sutra—A Mahayana Text*, Taipei: SMC Publishing Inc. 1991, p.21.

[236] Although the *Śrīmālādevisūtra*'s claim that the tathāgatagarbha is the tathāgata-realm has something to do with the Yogācāra School (see chapter two), nevertheless the connotation of realm with regard to tathāgatagarbha is not necessarily brought out by the latter. In fact, the *Gaṇḍa-vyūha-sūtra*, which interprets

from "wisdom" to "realized-realm" due to the influence of the doctrine of "parinișpannasvabhāva" and/or Yogācāra philosophy cannot be denied. Threfore, it cannot be denied that the decisive contributor to this doctrinal development from wisdom to realm was the Yogācāra school. The Yogācāra texts interpret tathāgatagarbha on the basis of parinișpannasvabhāva or tathatā, and therefore, following their logical train of thought, it is natural to find that Yogācāra scholars emphasize the "connotation of realm" with regard to tathāgatagarbha and diminish their emphasis on the "connotation of wisdom."[237]

The Meaning of Tathāgatagarbha	Emphasized Aspect	Scope of Meaning Covered
Tathāgatagarbhasūtra	Realizing-Wisdom	Wisdom: "tathāgata-wisdom," "flawless wisdom of Buddha-dharma," and so on
Śrīmālādevisūtra		Wisdom: "Tathāgata-Śūnyatā-Wisdom" Realm: "Tathāgata-Realm"
Laṅkāvatārasūtra	Realized-Realm	Wisdom: samyagjñāna included in the parinișpannasvabhāva Realm: "parinișpanasvabhāvas-tathāgatagarbhahṛdayam", "tathāgatagarbha-svapratyātmāryajñānagocara"

tathāgatagarbha as the tathāgata-wisdom has alrealy brought up the idea that "there is no tathatā separate from the wisdom, no wisdom separate from the tathatā" (無有如外境, 無有境外如), and the oneness of tathatā and wisdom indiscriminately produces the possibility of bestowing the meaning of "realm" upon tathāgatagarbha. Therefore, the source of the connotation of realm is possibily incubated within the tathāgatagarbha tradition itself. Probably at the same time the Yogācāra School bestowed an external influence on this trend and thus speeded up the doctrinal development.

[237] For example, Lu, Cheng 呂澂 in his work *Leng-Qie-Ru-Lai-Zang-Zhang-Jiang-Yi* 楞伽如來藏章講義 claims that: "tathāgatagarbha is discussing the issue of realm .... Common people regard the tathāgatagarbha as mysterious and enigmatic and grasp it as the subject aspect of mentality; thus, there arises the erroneous view of original awareness. They do not understand that the tathāgatagarbha should be discussed from the aspect of realm, and then extend to their understanding to the names of śūnyatā, nirvāṇa, etc. in order to be reasonable". For details, see p.263. It is definitely inspiring that some Yogācāra scholars interpret tathāgatagarbha from the angle of realm; however, tathāgata-wisdom as the "subject aspect of mentality" is exactly the original meaning of the tathāgatagarbha.

The definition of "parinișpanasvabhāva" extends from "tathatā" to "samyagjñāna," but the focus of "tathāgatagarbha" shifts from "tathāgata-wisdom" to "tathāgata-realm." These two opposing polarities converge in "parinișpanasvabhāvastathāgatagarbha" in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* and thus cause tathāgatagarbha to shift its focus and broaden its scope. Thus it can be seen that in the later period of the tathāgatagarbha tradition, Yogācāric doctrine had a very strong influence upon the tathāgatagarbha teaching and is therefore worthy of careful examination.

CHAPTER SIX:

CONCLUSION

The *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* can be understood as a text that not only represents tathāgatagarbha doctrine but also grounds itself in the ontology of the tathāgatagarbha theory. However, because the tathāgatagarbha doctrine as found in *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* has been greatly influenced by Yogācāra thinking, it has distinctive characteristics in comparison to the tathāgatagarbha thought prior to this sūtra. Therefore, this thesis, based on a textual study of the original Sanskrit text together with its Chinese and Tibetan translations and commentaries, has aimed to reveal the distinguishing features of the tathāgatagarbha theory as expressed in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* and as influenced by Yogācāra doctrine. In order to accomplish this aim, three Sanskrit compounds – i.e., *tathāgatanairātmyagarbha*, *tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna*, and *pariniṣpannasvabhāvas tathāgatagarbhahṛdayam* – have been extracted from the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra.* On the basis of these three compounds, three important perspectives with respect to Yogācāric influence have been elucidated.

First, in regard to the compound *tathāgatanairātmyagarbha*, it should be noted that to the term "*nairātmya*" (non-self) can be attributed different meanings according to different traditions. For example, in primitive Buddhism, the notion of *nairātmya* is focused on the negation of an eternal and independent *ātman*, since no form of existence can be verified beyond the principle of co-dependent origination (*pratītyasamutpāda*). According to Madhyamaka tradition, the term *nairātmya* is used as a synonym of *niḥsvabhāva* (non-intrinsic-nature), which implies that all beings, be they conditioned or unconditioned, are devoid of intrinsic nature. For the Yogācāra tradition, however, *nairātmya* is used in the

sense of an imagined self (*kalpitātman*), but not in the sense of an indescribable self (*anabhilāpyātman*). This survey of *nairātmya* within the different Buddhist traditions indicates that the compound *tathāgatanairātmyagarbha,* as found in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, accords well with the Yogācāra tradition. That is to say, in the Yogācāra tradition, *ātman* from the perspective of the imagined-self is non-existent while the genuine self of *tathāgatagarbha* must be existent.

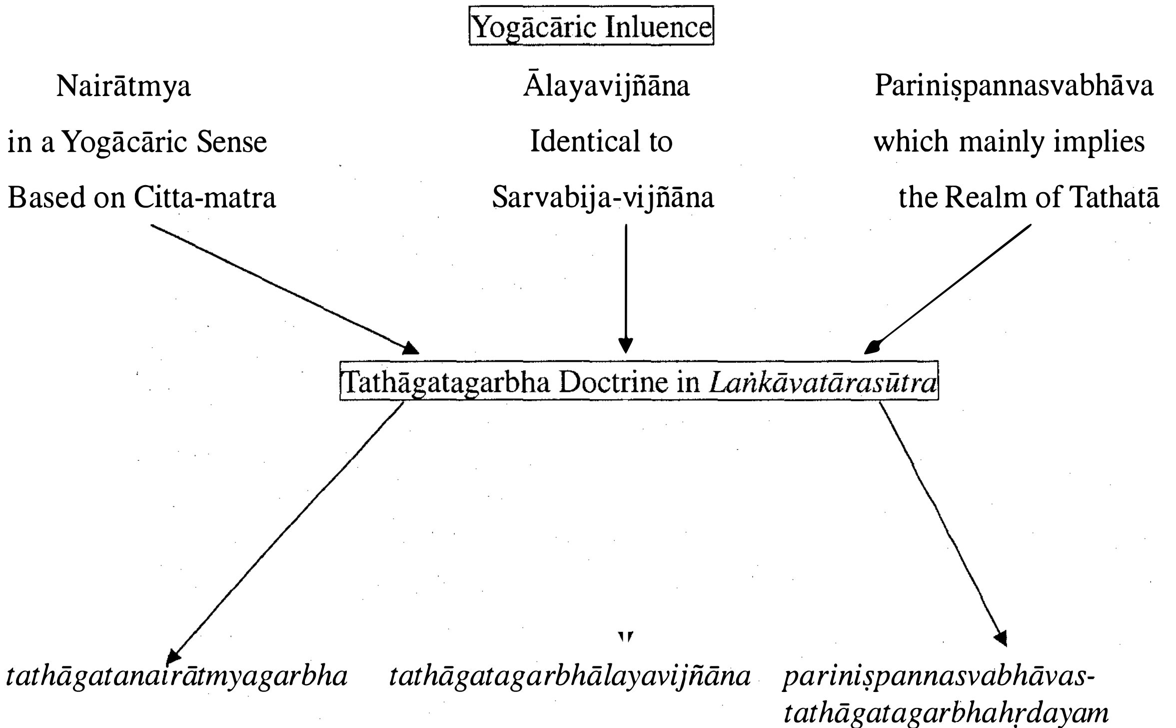
Secondly, in regard to the compound *tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna*, we find that this unprecedentedly coined term best displays the Yogācāric influence on the tathāgatagarbha doctrine. Throughout the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, the term *tathāgatagarbha* is mentioned as a synonym of *ālayavijñāna.* Consequently, from a doctrinal point of view, the tathāgatagarbha doctrine inherits from the Yogācāra understanding of *ālayavijñāna* the causal function of all dharmas. Prior to the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, the term *tathāgatagarbha* functioned to indicate merely the base or support of all existences, but according to the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, the term *tathāgatagarbha* became endowed with a new meaning that indicated a function of producing, just as a dynamic seed is that from which a plant originates. This doctrinal development is probably due to the fact that *ālayavijñāna* is also named *sarvabījavijñāna* (cognition as the seed of everything), indicating its function of bringing forth all forms of existences.

Thirdly, in regard to the compound *pariniṣpannasvabhāvas tathāgatagarbhahṛdayam,* the richness of tathāgatagarbha appears further articulated in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra.* Ultimately speaking, *tathāgatagarbha* should be an inseparable unity of both subjective wisdom and the objective realm. However, texts in the earlier period of the Tathāgatagarbha tradition tended to emphasize the subjective dimension by claiming that the tathāgatagarbha

inherent in all sentient beings is the potential for becoming a Buddha. In *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, however, by declaring that *pariniṣpannasvabhāva* (the perfected nature) is the very essence of the tathāgatagarbha, the latter is exhaustively interpreted from the two dimensions of *samyagjñāna* (the subjective correct knowledge) and *tathatā* (the objective state of suchness).

To conclude, the Yogācāric influence on the tathāgatagarbha doctrine can be vividly demonstrated by investigating the three compounds *tathāgatanairātmyagarbha*, *tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna*, and *pariniṣpannasvabhāvastathāgatagarbhahṛdayam* in conjunction with the three basic concepts of *dharmanairātmya*, *ālayavijñāna*, and *pariniṣpannasvabhāva* that play a prominent role in the Yogācāra tradition. Through thorough research into these three perspectives, this thesis has revealed the richness and complexity of the tathāgatagarbha doctrine as found in *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*.

The illustration below shows the scheme of this study.



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